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NEW STATESMAN

- Why there will be a slump
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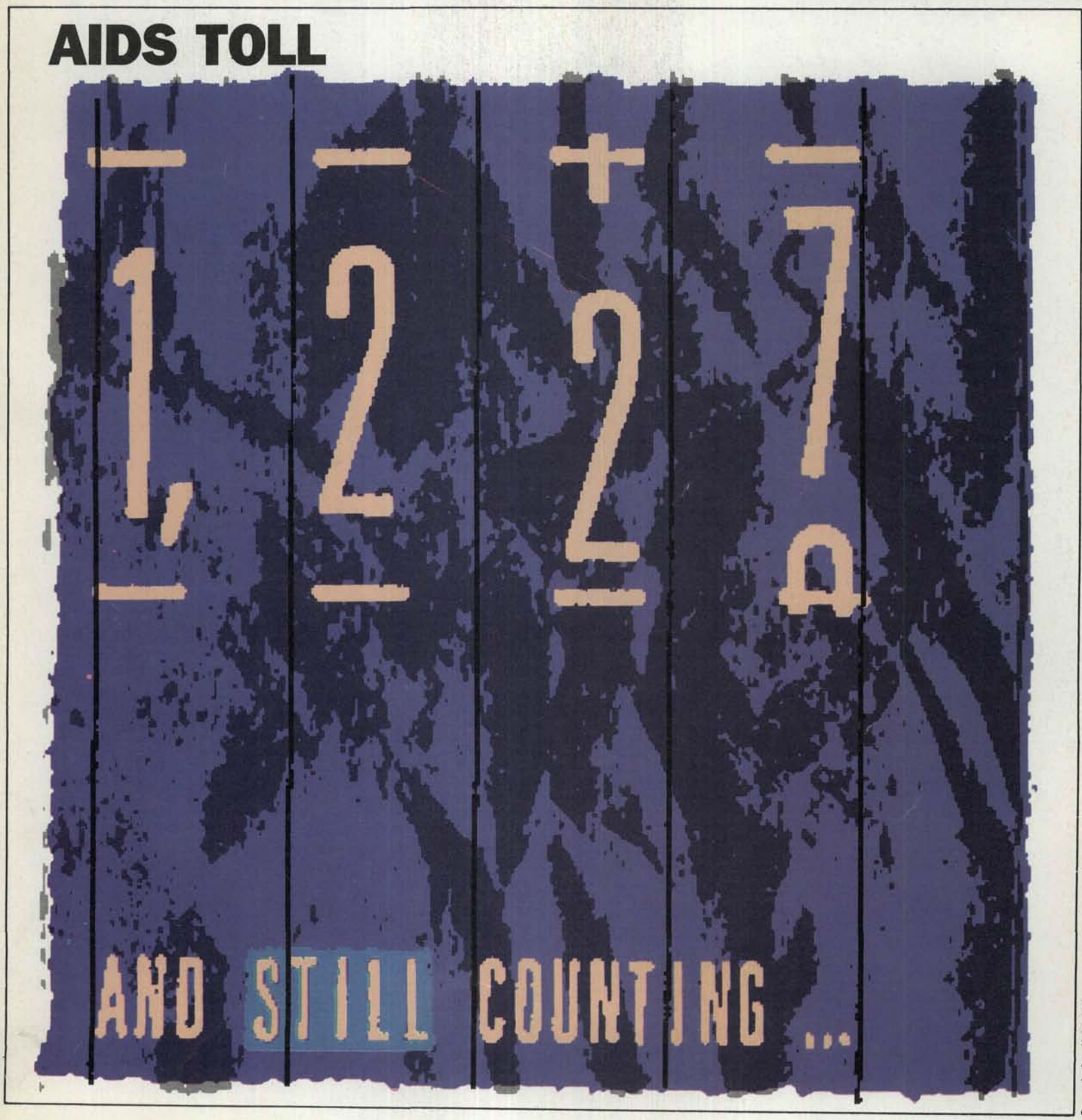
Never the twain shall meet

AIDS TOLL



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GREENPEACE

DIRTY BEACHES

Many of Britain's bathing beaches are contaminated with raw sewage and fail to meet European Community standards for bathing water.

Greenpeace has measured bacteria levels at 16 popular beaches, conducted health studies and posted warning signs to bathers where there are evident health hazards.

THANK GOD SOMEONE'S MAKING WAVES.

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THE GREAT WHALES

The great whales are not saved.
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Greenpeace lobbies governments, sends investigation teams to expose illegal catches and sails against whaling ships to protect "the greatest creatures that grace the seas."

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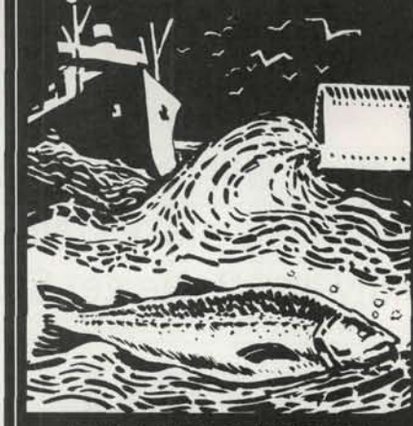

THE NORTH SEA

After two years of direct action and research campaigning, Greenpeace successfully influenced the recent North Sea Conference.
Ocean incineration is to be banned.
Sea dumping of many industrial wastes is to be outlawed. Best available technology is to be applied to reduce radioactive discharges.

THANK GOD SOMEONE'S MAKING WAVES.

GREENPEACE

NUCLEAR WEAPONS

While the world waits for nuclear arms reductions, new warheads are being tested, built and added to the stockpiles – daily.

Greenpeace advocates a ban on nuclear weapons tests to stop new types of weapons replacing the old.

Greenpeace has interrupted French, British and US nuclear tests and protested in the USSR, all to bring about real nuclear disarmament.

THANK GOD SOMEONE'S MAKING WAVES.

GREENPEACE

DOLPHINS IN DANGER.

North Sea dolphins and porpoises are disappearing. Pollution and modern fishing nets kill thousands each year. Now, Greenpeace has launched a scientific research programme and direct action campaign to save them.

THANK GOD SOMEONE'S MAKING WAVES.

GREENPEACE

ACID RAIN

Acid rain kills trees, flowers, birds, butterflies, frogs, fishes, streams, rivers, lakes... and people too.
To stop it, Greenpeace lobbies industry and parliaments, holds seminars and makes direct action protests throughout Europe and North America.

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GREENPEACE

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NEW STATESMAN

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NEXT WEEK

Alexander Cockburn files his first fortnightly report from America on US policy in Nicaragua and the Middle East *Plus:* The widening North-South divide, in cash and votes

Floating pounds

WITH THE connivance of the press, Nigel Lawson has been covertly testing public opinion about his budget plans. The Chancellor, we were told, could give away £11 billion on 15 March, and still achieve his official borrowing target. This would be enough to bring down the standard rate of income tax to 20p in the pound.

Plainly, expansion on that scale would be reckless. But there is considerable disagreement about just how large an injection of funds could be made while maintaining inflation at its present level. The answer depends substantially upon the degree of targeting.

The worst possible scenario is that being floated currently: to reduce the standard rate of income tax to 25p and the higher rate from 60p to 40p (at a cost of £3 billion), leaving the rest in the bank to contribute to a budget surplus. This could produce only 71,000 jobs and would do nothing to alleviate the pressures on the NHS or on housing.

Nigel Lawson can perhaps justify such a package to himself, but not to anyone else. Our advice to the Chancellor would be to take careful stock of the priorities as defined by the British people. At the last election, health and unemployment consistently came top of the policy polls. Child benefit, too, is recognised by the nation as an entirely justifiable expenditure for the protection of children from poverty. If the Chancellor were carefully to target £7 billion on these priorities, the opposition parties would be left floundering and inflation would remain under control.

On the health service, we have heard much of dying babies with heart disease. We hear nothing, however, of the similarly harrowing but less dramatic effects of psychiatric hospital wards without a single qualified staff nurse, or of sick elderly people being sent home to fend for themselves because their beds are needed for new patients in even more critical need. The case for an injection of funds into the NHS in place of a hand-out to the wealthy goes without saying.

Rapid economic growth during 1987 has led to a real, but small, fall in unemployment. However, that fall is very much smaller than the government would have us believe — at least a third of it being due to administrative and policy changes which affect how the state measures the number of people out of work.

However we look at it, the number of people without permanent or real jobs remains somewhere between three and four million, and according to the main economic forecasters, that total is likely to remain of that order for the foreseeable future. The government's latest response has been to switch from make-work schemes to a training programme, but with no additional funding. The need for training is clear. Only 20 per cent of unemployed people are skilled, while 80 per cent of vacancies are for skilled people. However, employers, scheme managers and unemployed people all expect the scheme to be of poor quality and, to add injury to injury, coercion will be used to ensure participation.

Instead of this miserable approach, the 1988 budget provides the opportunity for the government to make a major breakthrough in Britain's skills capacity and hence her competitiveness abroad. Sweden spends 2 per cent of its national income on training and employment programmes for relatively few unemployed people (equivalent to £8 billion in the United Kingdom). An increase from the present £1.5 billion to £2.5 billion would hardly be an excessive first step towards a right-to-work and good quality training for the unemployed.

A further £2 billion should be devoted to work and training in the construction industry and on the country's infrastructure in particular. Unemployment is high among construction workers. At the same time, the nation urgently needs to invest in new housing and hospitals. Homelessness has increased by 25 per cent since 1981. Hospital beds have been reduced by more than 20 per cent while the elderly population has increased sharply, imposing an intolerable burden on health workers. A further £1 billion should be used to boost staffing levels in hospitals and the employment and DHSS services. (The DHSS service has broken down almost completely in many inner-city areas.)

These programmes, directing investment to parts of the economy where there is genuine economic slack, could be pursued without rekindling inflation.

The government deliberately keeps people unemployed in the fallacious belief that they'll compete for jobs and keep wages down. But it is well established that long-term unemployed people don't compete for jobs — they opt out — and therefore do not contribute to any downward pressure on wages. So giving them work would not lead to wage inflation.

The last priority area for Nigel Lawson would to increase child benefit. The decision to freeze child benefit looks even meaner in light of the fact that while rich families with children have become richer since 1979, poor families are poorer. To switch £3 billion from a standard rate tax cut to an increase in child benefit would reach the people most in need. Nigel Lawson can afford to be fair. □

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DIARY

I suppose one oughtn't to rejoice at the misfortunes of the Liberals and Social Democrats. But, then again, why not? All the flounderings of the past week or so confirm what I've believed for some time: that the Social Democrats are merging with the wrong bunch. Even the nicer, less Owenite SocDems of my acquaintance would be perfectly at home in a party which already manages to accommodate Peter Bottomley, Chris Patten and others of their stripe. The party in question is, of course, the Conservatives. Many a Tory cheese-and-wine evening in the suburbs would be perked up no end by the presence of a few Social Democrats. (The quality of scoffing and quaffing would improve no end, too.) This would leave the Liberals free to make friends with Labour, or at least those parts of Labour which haven't yet been infected by Neil Kinnock's dread of radicalism. What could be jollier?

○

Here are three things I know about Bob Maclennan:

1) He has a chip on his shoulder. He was one of the original signatories of the Limehouse Declaration and he was responsible for creating the SDP constitution, so it has always irked him that he wasn't regarded as an equal by the Gang of Four.

2) He has no political judgment whatsoever. He organised the famous Round Robin letter praising Reg Prentice's fine qualities as a Labour MP. You may recall that Prentice joined the Conservative Party not long afterwards, and it later transpired that the "save Reg" campaign had been run by an extreme right-wing infiltrator, Dr Julian Lewis.

3) He is incapable of performing even the simplest domestic task, such as cooking an omelette.

I leave it up to you to decide which of these is the most discreditable.

○

A few days ago the members of the Crime Writers' Association gathered together for an annual event called the Basil Copper Crime Quiz. Who, one question asked, was the monster of Dusseldorf? (Correct answer: Peter Kuerten, 1920s murderer.) "Ah," cried one oldster, "it's Peter, er . . . got it — Peter Kellner." Up to a point, Basil Copper.

○

What has happened to the Broadcasting Standards Authority, promised on the spur of the moment by Douglas Hurd to please the Tory conference last October and scarcely heard of since? It was to deal with moans about bad language and Tony Harrison poems, oh and that Colin on *EastEnders* and girl-brides presenting *The Roxy* and those lefties at *Panorama* . . .

Now it seems that the necessary legislation cannot be put through until the next parliamentary session, beginning in October. But the Home Office enigmatically says that the Authority might come to life before then, without statutory backing.

It will be a quango (of the sort that this government is supposed to be against, but let that pass), and much will therefore depend on who is chairing it. Two names mentioned are the Thatcherite bishop Graham Leonard and, since his retirement to the 19th hole, Willie Whitelaw. But there is worse: Home Office civil servants fear that Thatcher will try to fix the job for her friend Mary Whitehouse.

I'm happy to set their fears at ease. Mary Whitehouse herself was abroad this week, but her spokesman, John Beyer, assured me that "even if she's offered the post she probably wouldn't take it anyway". He explained: "While we've campaigned for an independent body of this sort it doesn't necessarily mean that we want to be involved or chair it. It wouldn't have much credibility as being unbiased or impartial would it?" Er, no.

○

"Now This Stun Gun Is Confirmed Legal, Innocent People Can Properly Defend Themselves," shrieks an advertisement for a nasty new weapon. The gun delivers a severe electric charge when you push the firing button. "A one-second charge will penetrate the attacker's clothing and cause him to drop to the ground (almost instantly) dazed and disorientated. A longer blast can stun the attacker for up to 10 minutes. Sounds terrible? It's meant to be."

But isn't it also an offensive weapon? I rang the gun's distributors to inquire. "Um, not if you keep it at home," a polite young man suggested. "Though if you take it for a walk in the street it would be. You'll be done if you're caught with it. It's at your own risk." He nevertheless continued to insist that the gun was "legal", though he conceded that "the Home Office don't like it".

What with stun guns and Mary Whitehouse to crowd their nightmares, for once in my life I feel almost sorry for the Home Office. No doubt it'll pass.

○

The heterosexual naughty vicar has been a stock figure in the racier Sunday papers for years; his ancestry goes back at least as far as the poor old rector of Stiffkey, who was fired for adultery and eventually eaten by a lion. But the gay vicar is a new phenomenon. He has always been around, of course; it's merely that the press seems not to have noticed him until quite recently. With even the supposedly liberal Archbishop of Canterbury now turning against "pulpit poofs" (to use the *Sun*'s delightful formulation) I thought it a good moment to climb the perilous spiral staircase in the tower of St Botolph's, in the City of London, and pay a visit to the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement's general secretary, the Rev. Richard Kirker. Dapper, charming and witty, he seemed remarkably cheerful in the circs. "One parish got in touch last week and said they'd decided only to appoint homosexual clergy in future," he chortled.

The Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement should on no account be confused with the other homosexual element in the C of E — right-wing and misogynist Anglo-Catholics, like the late Dr Gareth Bennett. Kirker and his colleagues are committed feminists (a point I haven't seen in the voluminous press coverage) and support the ordination of women. "The level of animosity 30 years ago towards women and their attempts to be ordained was every bit as great as that against us now," he says. The women stuck it out, and so will the gay vicars.

○

Incidentally, I was vastly amused to see that John Cordle is a leading light of the campaign to defrock gay vicars. Describing Cordle merely as a former Tory MP and "leading lay Anglican", the *Sunday Telegraph* quotes him thus: "The majority of right-thinking and decent men in the street cannot tolerate clerics in whatever denomination who indulge in the abominable and intolerable practices of buggery and homosexual genital sex."

What the *Telegraph* forgot to mention is that Cordle is not merely a "leading lay Anglican" but also has the distinction of being the only MP since 1947 to be forced out of the House after an investigation of his business affairs. He was forced to resign his seat in July 1977 after his lucrative involvement with John Poulson had been condemned by a Commons select committee. This "leading lay Anglican" has also happily ignored the Church of England's belief in marriage as a life-long commitment, having been divorced twice.

Few people, as you can see, are better qualified to lecture on morality, especially on behalf of the "decent men in the street". I hope we hear plenty more from him.

Francis Wheen

ROGER WODDIS

Really Useful Royal

Prince Edward has been given a job as production assistant in Andrew Lloyd Webber's Really Useful Theatre Company

I've refused to join the ravers
Since I left the Royal Marines,
Being bored with princely favours,
Not to mention kings and queens.
If I can't be Nigel Havers,
Then I'll work behind the scenes,
So when Andrew asked what job I would prefer,
I said, "*Anything*, oh, Mr Webber — *sir*!"

I'm a Really Useful Royal,
Working backstage like a slave;
Everyone is madly loyal,
Though I've barely time to wave.
I make coffee, deal with letters,
I run errands for my betters,
I'm a Really Useful Royal on a wage.

I'm a Really Useful Royal,
Learning how to run the show,
And my taste for heavy toil
Is far keener than you know.
It will hardly please the Pater,
So my joy is all the greater
As a Really Useful Royal on the stage.

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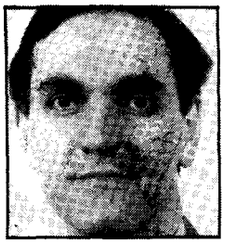

BEN PIMLOTT

The Labour Party shouldn't be seen gloating, but is gloating like hell

FOLLOWING the Alliance's week of calamity and elastoplast, there are several questions of interest to practical politicians concerned about mundane matters like the future of the country. None of them has much to do with the deep issues of theology which have been setting Liberal against Liberal, Social Democrat against Social Democrat since the general election.

First, when will David Steel's long anticipated departure occur? Second, who will take over as chief spokesperson for middle-of-the-road, middle-brow, Britain? The third related question is what, if anything, the Labour Party is going to do to make the most of its best break since Mrs Thatcher came to power. For if the Tories stand to gain something from the disintegration, Labour ought to be the main beneficiary, unless it succeeds — as so often in the past — in shooting itself in the foot.

Contemplating the Alliance *angst*, it is tempting just to laugh. Two newspapers last weekend quoted Lord Whitelaw (during the Winter of Discontent) on the subject of enjoying your opponents' misfortunes. "I am told that we should not gloat. Well I tell you this. I am going to gloat. I am going to gloat like hell!" Both newspapers had Owen in mind. Yet, in reality, it is the Labour leadership that has sole ground for gratification, unless Owen's only remaining ambition is to destroy what he himself built up.

Certainly the doctor can be forgiven some satisfaction at the week's events. He has long found it hard to conceal his contempt for Steel. Contempt became a more intense emotion after Steel got the better of him following the election. Long portrayed as a lapdog, the Liberal leader turned and bit his master where it hurt. For a time, Steel was able to present himself as the voice of conciliation and reason, in contrast to Owen's pique and petulance. Then came last week's ludicrous smash, destroying every shred of Steel's credibility.

"I must look sombre," said Owen in a now-famous aside. "I mustn't be seen grinning." Every paper carried a photograph of Owen's face gashed with a savagely triumphant smile. The final delight came when the egg-splattered Liberal and SDP leaders had put the policy together with sticky tape, and Robert Maclennan padded over to Limehouse-les-deux-églises. Aloof and proud, the general said *Non*.

If Owen was able to take pleasure in the downfall of those who had previously been close colleagues, this was partly because he had helped to bring it about. The main reason for the initial disaster over policy was incompetence. But an important factor was nervousness about the SDP anti-merger campaign. Maclennan was desperate, paranoiac even, about losing some of his own demoralised colleagues to the Owenites. Both Maclennan and Steel had staked everything on bringing the talks to a conclusion that would unite the factions. Both were convinced, quite wrongly, that the most serious threat to a merger agreement came from the SDP side.

Of the two, Maclennan was the more dogged. Time and again he threatened to pull out of the negotiations on the grounds that the SDP would not accept the terms. Steel, with at best a hazy perception of policy detail, repeatedly conceded. Both men suffered from a most curious failure of judgment: Steel in showing insensitivity to the feelings of his own supporters, and Maclennan in taking no notice of warnings that the Liberal leader lacked antennae. But always in the background was the lowering hypnotic figure of David Owen. Both negotiators believed that they had broken his spell. Both remained, cravenly, in his thrall.

> ***"The Maclennanite SDP can either go down on bended knee to the Liberals, beg forgiveness for past rudeness and ask for mercy; or put a pistol in its own mouth and pull the trigger"***

Hence the spectacle of Liberal MPs unanimously rejecting a document prepared by their own leader, and their desperate endorsement a few days later of another statement saying something completely different.

YET OWEN's pleasure at the outcome is emotional, not rational. If he has made clear that there is no possibility of the Owenite band joining a merged party, the prospect of the bulk of the SDP agreeing to accept his own authority is equally non-existent. If the SDP did re-unite with him as leader, the future for the un-merged and rivalrous "Alliance" would be even bleaker. As it is, whatever the non-Owen SDP chooses to do next, there is no future in British politics for a party whose sole *raison d'être* is the demonic energy of its leader.

If the Liberals reject the new, honey-worded policy statement this Saturday, or the SDP do so a week later, there are a dozen possible outcomes, but none of them is favourable to Dr Owen. The most likely is renewed negotiation and another package later on, under a new Liberal leader. The Liberals were right to reject the inept first statement, which sold out needlessly to the Thatcherite wing of the SDP. They would be foolish to refuse merger on the basis of the second one, which is significant not for what it says (it is deliberately platitudinous) but because it demonstrates where power lies. The SDP has been compelled to give way on every issue of substance. The reality is not just that the Liberals have more MPs, a larger and more stable membership, and a more convincing heritage behind them. It is also that they have least to lose by carrying on as they are. Hence they are able to dictate. It would be tidier and less damaging for Liberals to take on board sailors from the wrecked ship Social Democrat, and for this reason they would do well to do so on their own terms.

While the Liberals have a real choice, the alternatives facing the Maclennanite SDP are simple: either to go down on bended knee to the Liberals, beg forgiveness for past rudeness, and ask for a degree of mercy; or to put a pistol in its own mouth and pull the trigger. Without the Liberals, the SDP is nothing. If there is to be no merger, the majority of the membership will return, disillusioned, to the void whence they came. That is the absurdity of the Steel-Maclennan "dead parrot" negotiations. It was a poker game played with every appearance of earnestness, yet the SDP leader's hand contained no cards.

In the end, whether the 1987 Alliance becomes one party or two, or even three, the electorally dominant one will be the Liberals who, if there is a merger, will be able to determine the constitution, direction and leadership of the new structure. Which brings us back the question of David Steel's successor. If the merger does not go through at Blackpool this weekend, he will have to resign at once. If it does, he has said that he is "unlikely" to stand as leader of the new party. The probability, therefore, is a new leader of the political centre by the autumn.

With Maclennan disgraced and Kennedy too young, the SDP has nobody to offer. In the Liberal Party, there are dark horses aplenty, including Simon Hughes, Malcolm Bruce and Alex Carlile. The present favourite is Paddy Ashdown, but the smart money is on Alan Beith. It will be an interesting contest, between a cavalier and a roundhead. Ashdown is Prince Rupert, flashier, more flamboyant, better able to inspire the troops. Beith is Cromwell, cooler, calmer, more settled in his values and views. Ashdown is thought to be more radical, which means that he sounds like somebody who enjoys the noise of gunfire. Beith is cast in a nineteenth-century, nonconformist, North Country, sightly staid and prudish mould, yet does not lack some fierce anti-establishment instincts.

Beith is the more trusted, especially by the MPs, and this would make him the better unifier. Whether he would be good or bad for Labour is an interesting point. Implosion in the centre offers the prospect of rich electoral pickings. On the other hand, a competent and well-directed Alliance leader would have attractions too. It will take time for the Alliance to recover as an electoral force. Meanwhile, Labour should be considering the advantages to be gained from dealing informally with whatever new Liberal-controlled formation may yet emerge, while taking reasonable comfort from the ultimate self-destruction of the SDP. □

See Sarah Benton, p12.

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Nuclear waste panic hits Germany

Geneva

NUCLEAR *angst* in West Germany is reaching new heights as revelations rocket around the country about uncontrolled transportation of nuclear waste. In a collective frenzy not seen since Chernobyl, the press and opposition politicians of West Germany are outbidding each other with denunciations of nuclear power and have sharply forced Chancellor Kohl's government onto the defensive.

The disposal of radioactive nuclear waste has always been the most sensitive, most open-to-criticism link in the nuclear industry chain. The revelations by the mass circulation *Der Spiegel* — which in recent months has been a more powerful opposition to the Kohl government than the Social-democrats (SPD) and Greens combined — that a German company based near Frankfurt had illegally transported several thousand flasks of radioactive material set off its own chain reaction.

Swiss middlemen, bribes to officials, false custom declarations, the hard-currency-hungry East German and Polish governments willing to turn disused mines into nuclear waste disposal units, all came together to disturb as deeply as possible the West German population. The traditional German pride in enematic cleanliness, honest bureaucracy and autobahns without speed limits was called horribly into question.

Functionaries were on the fiddle, the waste deposited at the end of the nuclear process either has to lie there clogging up the system or else be taken to some non-democratic country for burial, while the smallest accident on German motorways on which speeds of less than 200km per hour (125mph) are considered wimpish would lead to a radioactive catastrophe.

The story got worse with allegations that fissionable material had been shipped via Belgium and East Germany to Pakistan and Libya to help build nuclear bombs for General Zia and Colonel Gadafy. After Chernobyl, the pro-nuclear lobby in West Germany placed much emphasis on the need for strengthened international supervision. But two years after Chernobyl it appears there are four or five European countries involved in illegal nuclear waste dealing and possible breaches of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty without any effective international supervision at all. Leaders of the ruling Christian Democrats (CDU), who have jumped on the privatisation bandwagon with the rest of the European right, were reduced to mumbling about the state taking over nuclear waste transport in order to guarantee security.

More than in any other country, the nuclear issue in West Germany is intimately bound up with mainstream politics. In the current issue of the French left-wing weekly *Nouvel Observateur*, Beatrice Weber, a West German SPD Euro-MP, patiently explains to the French left: "The problem of the environment rather than peace or unemployment lies at the heart of political discussion in Germany." Unlike Britain, where post-1968 Green energies organised themselves into traditionally British pressure groups — Friends of the Earth, CND, Save the Whale and so on — the equivalent forces in Germany coalesced into the Green party which this decade has commanded a crucial swing vote in regional and national elections.

It has been a conscious strategy of the SPD to re-incorporate this Green vote. In opposition the SPD has overturned its guarded endorsement of the nuclear industry and promised a phased withdrawal from nuclear power.

The non-nuclear policy has yet to work electorally. Even with Chernobyl behind them the SPD and the Greens did relatively badly with their non-nuclear policy in the elections a year ago. Powerful newspaper advertising campaigns constantly hammer on the energy theme, asking Germans where their electricity will come from if not the nuclear industry. The Greens are as hard on coal and oil as they are on nuclear fission and the disintegration of the Green party in the past months into the bitterly opposed "fundamental" and "realist" camps as well as squabbles over personalities, worthy of, say, David Owen, means that the party has failed to increase its support beyond its founding core from the 1968 generation.

The German trade union confederation came out against nuclear power in the immediate aftermath of Chernobyl but since then some of its powerful industrial unions have softened their opposition. The latest scandal, which is being exploited with great vigour by the SPD which faces a nervous Kohl government suffering from a standstill in the economy, has put new life into the anti-nuclear forces in West Germany, with ripples spreading out to Belgium and Switzerland.

Even the conservative weekly, *Die Zeit*, went a bit green last weekend with a gloomy, front-page editorial about Germany's and the world's atomic Pandora's box. If the problem of nuclear waste disposal cannot be solved, the German scandal is likely to reproduce itself elsewhere. But not in East Germany. Last Sunday 30 members of an East German environmental and peace group were arrested when they unfurled banners in the middle of an official demonstration to honour Rosa Luxembourg. The banners said: "Freedom is the freedom to think other thoughts." Western film crews were roughed up by the police as they tried to get close to the demonstrators.

The ruling party in East Berlin is not going to allow *glasnost* or *perestroika* to divert East Germany's destiny from being a nuclear dustbin for its richer, worried, big brother.

Denis MacShane

Afraid of history

EVER SINCE I read of them last week, Nicholas Ridley's privatisation plans for our nature reserves have haunted me obsessively. Why, given this government's record of onslaughts on social services and cultural life? Because, I think, they constitute a peculiarly frightening and complete index of the administration's mentality.

Let's start with what almost all of us would acknowledge: nature's restorative power. We British are very fortunate in that no conurbation is out of easy reach of countryside of extraordinary beauty. There's no better solace for problems then even a few hours spent there, and we have ample evidence that the British are eminently appreciative of this.

You would have thought that an administration so dedicated to good conduct as the present one

would have wanted to support so effective a pacifier as the countryside. But then contact with Nature assists us to a sense of proportion. It's also a great democratiser: we all stand as equals before the natural world. Furthermore, in Britain, where almost every hobby, sport or cultural pursuit carries class connotations, only delight in landscape and its flora and fauna is quite free of them.

Nature reminds us of claims deeper than those of a narrowly defined society, and because of this, appreciation of it cuts across all the divisions society has seen fit to create or perpetuate. Is it any wonder that the Social Darwinists of the Thatcher administration find it logical to write the death-warrants of large tracts of wild life?

For it might have been thought that a political party which has trafficked in patriotic notions as much as the present Tories would have found room for chauvinistic enthusiasm for the face of Britain. Yet Ridley is as cavalier about the conservation of ancient buildings as he is about that of the country and its denizens. While there is, of course, the clearest commercial reason for his attitude, once again, I feel, there is a deeper one, and once again it turns out to be fear.

The Conservative government is afraid of history. Thatcherism wants the past to be abolished in some sudden clap of approving consumerist thunder; for all the heritage of radicals, enthusiasts, dissidents, time-servers, misfits and innocents to be blasted conveniently away. What contemplation of them all, and their legacy, might produce is as dangerous as the atavism engendered by Nature. An authoritarian philosophy such as the Thatcherites' cannot brook complexity and relativism.

I'm interested in the word Ridley uses for the conservationists' protests: hysteria. In a way it indicates his essential moral uneasiness. I am sure that Ridley would find my other objections to his plans extremely hysterical: that I believe we have a grave moral responsibility to the creature-life that shares this world with us, that we should live continually in the past and in the future as well as in the present. No room for that sort of cloudy idealism in a business-like nation-state!

Paul Binding

The author is a former deputy literary editor of the NS.

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Tell Henry about the arms deal

A NEW REPORT from a Pentagon advisory group shows that the US defence industry is doing business as usual, despite the signing of the INF treaty on 8 December and the prospect of further weapons cuts.

The report, "Discriminate Deterrence", was delivered to the President on 12 January by the Commission on Integrated Long Term Strategy, a hawkish group including Henry Kissinger and Anne Armstrong (a former ambassador to Britain). "Discriminate" is a new buzz-word incorporating "extended deterrence", which means persuading the Russians that the US is willing to risk Chicago to save Stuttgart, and "flexible response", which means working up gradually to nuclear war, rather than shooting off everything in the first 20 minutes.

The authors emphasise the need for more high-technology armaments. Four weapons programmes are "especially urgent": "stealth" systems (aircraft, missiles and satellites with low radar visibility); "smart" guided weapons with non-nuclear warheads and accurate guidance over long ranges; ballistic missile defence, including "Star Wars"; and — space capabilities for wartime operations. These are intended as additions to the existing armoury, not replacements.

The report comes at a time when two large US weapons programmes are in some difficulty. The US has a new land-based missile, the MX, alias "Peacekeeper", with ten warheads and an intended 120 metre accuracy over an 11,000 kilometre range, but no one in the Pentagon has so far been able to suggest a "survivable basing mode" acceptable to Congress (despite some whacky ideas like a special railway system). What's more, the guidance system is so unreliable that, as Congressman James Cooper said recently, "what we're really talking about is the probability of launching a nuclear attack against ourselves." Strategic Air Command's new B-1 bomber, an intended replacement for the aging B-52, is also troubled by faulty flight controls, malfunctioning bomb bay doors, leaky fuel tanks and radar jamming equipment which serves as a beacon.

The proposed new space defence and satellite programmes would be a considerable boost to the US defence industry (but not much to the European industry — see Mark Schapiro p18). Space-based radar, whose technology needs only "modest extrapolations", is a likely starter, despite its vulnerability to attack. In his State of the Union message on 25 January, Reagan is expected to approve a new $11.5 billion space programme, in addition to "Star Wars".

The wider context for "Discriminate Deterrence", and for the hardware developments which go with it, is the 40-year-old US adherence to the deterrence dogma. The dogma asserts that in the nuclear age the way to prevent war is to deter Russian aggression by threat of punishment. Reluctant to recognise that Mutual Assured Destruction would be the undoubted result of carrying out the threat, American deterrence theorists usually formulate their propositions as if Russia were the potential criminal, America the prospective magistrate.

Michael MccGwire of the Brookings Institution, a Washington think-tank, has recently analysed the deterrence dogma in several articles and in a book called *Military Objectives in Soviet Foreign Policy* (reviewed *NS* 24 [illegible] 1987). As MccGwire points out, it is characteristic of the dogma that Russia's aggressive intentions are always taken as given. Only its military *capabilities*, not its politics or diplomacy, are taken into account. This justifies exclusive "worst-case" calculations, based on the assumption that every conceivable Russian threat must be countered. The dogma therefore demands an inexorable growth in nuclear capabilities. Hence its ideological acceptability to US industry.

The new Pentagon report is thoroughly imbued with the deterrence dogma. The Commission which produced it promises more papers in the coming months, on weapons technologies and force deployments. The Reagan Administration will not have time to give full effect to its recommendations. Would it be too much to hope that its successor will "indiscriminately" reject them?

Felix Pirani

The author is Emeritus Professor of Rational Mechanics in London University.

Lord Young steals Labour policy

AT THE CENTRE of the shake-up of regional and industrial aid announced by the government last week is a policy the Labour Party has been advocating for most of this decade. But it was precisely that policy which Labour singled out for most vehement abuse. What's going on?

Lord Young, Trade and Industry Secretary, launched a White Paper, *DTI — the Department for Enterprise*, onto a sea of hype. Partly thanks to Labour's reactions, by far the most controversial bit of the White Paper was its proposals for the regions. In the past, the hundreds of millions of pounds dished out by the DTI each year to persuade companies to set up shop in depressed regions have fallen into two categories: automatic grants, which the government gives to all companies setting up or expanding in "development" areas, and selective grants, which ministers can hand out to projects they regard as top priority.

Lord Young announced the abolition of automatic grants. In future, any money given to industry in the regions will be at the discretion of ministers. Neil Kinnock denounced it as an act of "industrial sabotage". Tony Blair, giving Labour's response in the Commons, defended automatic grants as providing "certainty and stability".

Which is odd, because a move away from automatic to selective help for companies has been central to the industrial policies consistently put forward by the labour movement during the long years of Thatcherism.

Labour's industrial thinking has revolved round one idea. If a Labour government is to have any hope of influencing the decisions of companies, most of whose top management have little sympathy for Labour's goals, then all the levers available to government must be used as bargaining tools to persuade companies to work with the grain of Labour's economic, industrial and social plans.

Thus, "A New Partnership, A New Britain", the keynote TUC-Labour Party statement of the last parliament, stressed that "it will be important . . . that industrial assistance is conditional on a business plan agreed between unions and management" an idea amplified at length by Neil Kinnock in his book, *Making Our Way*.

The TUC in its statement on "Regional Development and Planning", spelt out that, to make regional and local planning bodies effective, "the amount of selective assistance . . . would be progressively increased until all assistance became selective".

Now no doubt Labour's industrial team has a legitimate worry that Lord Young will use the move to selective grants as an excuse for cutting back on spending in the regions. No doubt too Labour has to be seen to be defending its industrial fortresses in the north and Scotland. ▷

Congratulations

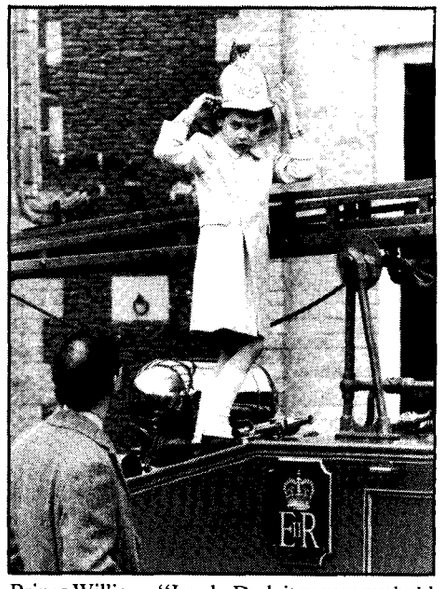
Steve Bell's WestEnders will be back next week. Steve and Heather Bell have just had a baby daughter, Katherine (after three sons). Congratulations to them and to John Lloyd and Marcia Levy on the arrival of a son.

If the caption fits

No 51

You will of course recognise John Prescott, the man who might have been deputy leader of the Labour Party. The chap sitting on his left is Neil Kinnock. What are they saying or thinking? Tell us what you think and win a ten-pound book-token. Entries to be in by Monday 1 February.

Winner: No 49



Prince William: "Look, Dad, it covers my bald spot nicely." (*Brian Ruth, London.*)

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But the net result of Labour's response was to shift attention from more questionable, if more complex, aspects of the White Paper, such as its downgrading of support for growth industries and its absurd proposals to shower public money on *management consultants*.

Equally important, Labour will have confused those few people left in the party who still take seriously its policies for manufacturing. Or perhaps the much-heralded policy review will reveal how Labour has a hope in hell of influencing companies' plans if a large slice of its industrial budget is handed out automatically to all-comers?

David Thomas

The author is on the industrial staff of the Financial Times.

Transports of 'the right'

VOTING BEGAN last week in the Transport and General Workers' Union executive elections, the union's first and probably last to be conducted under the aegis of the current Employment Act, permitting a mix of workplace and postal balloting. Thwarted in Liverpool, threatened in Bermondsey, and seemingly not very popular in constituency Labour parties, Militant and its allies on the "hard" left seem to be trying their hand in the unions.

Chief target is the TGWU which not only has a 1¼ million block vote at Labour Party conference but also a devolved structure making local takeovers easier than in more centralised unions. It is certainly the union of first choice for Militant's employees, and even ex-stars like publicist Derek Hatton and insurance agent Tony Mulhearn applied to join last year. (The branch refused their application.)

While the labour correspondents chase NUM contenders across the coalfields laid down in the age of the dinosaurs, Militant has produced a slate for the TGWU executive elections which is effectively a call for a return to the Jurassic age.

The slate, revealed in last week's *Militant* newspaper, implies a burying of the icepick between left-wing splinters, since it includes activists from the neo-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party and the born-again Stalinist Communist Campaign Group on a platform united on only one thing — hatred for the Labour leadership, and opposition to Labour's policy reviews.

The new alliance excoriates Brian Nicholson, the current president of the TGWU, for his support last year for the thoroughly unsocialist principle of allowing all Labour Party members a vote in choosing MPs. Nicholson would be an immediate casualty of a "hard" left victory since the president is elected by the executive committee, the new make-up of which will be announced on 27 February. At present he can muster 21 votes to 18, which is uncomfortably close.

Ron Todd, the TGWU General Secretary, is not under attack. Indeed a hard left victory is allegedly needed to give "left wing officers like Ron Todd a chance". The one issue which he feels most strongly about, non-nuclear defence, is not one in which the various factionettes have ever shown a degree of lasting interest.

Ian Williams

POLITICAL SKETCH

The finger-clicking Tendency

Edward Pearce

LET US GIVE Mrs Thatcher credit. She is making us think. Argument during the Shepherd debate about reform of the Official Secrets Act was both more urgent and more intelligent than it would have been a decade ago. There is this to be said for Mrs Thatcher's brand of authoritarianism, it is not discreet; emollient suasion plays no part in it.

Richard Shepherd, the birthday boy, is a profoundly impressive fellow. It is hard to praise the combination of sensible restraint, homework, passion and razor-blade-in-the-bath-towel irony with which he put the case last Friday too highly. He cares all right; as for his contempt for a captive press and the dull feeding at the penguin pool known as the Lobby, one can only jump up and cheer.

It was as good a day as I recollect spending in the Gallery, drawing speeches from all sides which do not deserve to be forgotten. Roy Hattersley — "It is possible to be both ridiculous *and* tyrannical" — was elegantly injurious, eschewing all tendencies to lacrymal Methodism and sensibly trying not to sound like an opposition politician. For the fascination of this debate and the wider one on authoritarianism flowing from it, is the quality of *Conservative* Opposition to the finger-clicking tendency.

Sir Ian Gilmour, with his weakness for reading history (a symptom of disloyalty to us in itself) recalled the licensing of newspapers and the stand against free speech and print made by the henchmen judges of the seventeenth century. "Our judiciary should take a good look at the seventeenth century," murmured Sir Ian. But then we have been told by Lord Hail, deputising for Lord Sham, that "Judges shouldn't start poking about in political matters". Exit Lord Holt who on the topic of negro slavery, thought the air of England "too free for a slave to breathe."

The present atmosphere is just about right for Sir Geoffrey Finsberg, a Margaritista to the last shackle and leg-iron. A law of life-long confidentiality should bind civil servants, to be enforced by the instant confiscation of their pension if they broke it. That seems peculiarly apt — that is to say mean, nasty and vengeful — for the hard core of bunker-loyal Thatcher people. That would be the right way to deal with Cathy Massiter wouldn't it, or Churchill's soldier informants on our pre-war defence deficiencies? We must take what comfort we can from the sub-mediocrity of those who gather, loyal to the last infamy, on the dark side of Mrs Thatcher — Finsberg, Ray Whitney, the patented, guaranteed Michael Mates.

But the blessed thing, and the left should acknowledge this, is that Mrs Thatcher and her whips are cutting against the Tory grain. The rebels are drawn from the right as well as the left wing of the party. Tony Marlow acted as one of Shepherd's tellers; and Mrs Thatcher, had she broken another precedent to go with the three-line whip, and attended, would have heard herself gently chidden by Julian Amery. "The trouble with this government is that it approaches security and secrecy matters with a singular lack of a sense of humour." Clearly Mr Amery's patriotism is very doubtful.

That is the reaction of a certain kind of lunatic secret service operator described by Edward Heath: "If they saw a chap on the tube reading the *Daily Mirror*, they'd say 'After him — Dangerous! Find out where he got it'." The Heath speech incidentally was quite brilliant, none of the personal resentments and greengage-sucking which can spoil him. "You couldn't have the Irangate enquiry here. You'd have it all referred to Sir Somebody Something. The citizens aren't fit to know".

THE EVIDENCE which ought to alert us is that of the Home Secretary who didn't speak. Mr Hurd indeed rose, promised an early unspecified legislation, spoke kindly of Mr Shepherd and omitted to give one reason that the bill should not proceed to committee. If the bill had been badly drawn or contained threads to pull at, surely the line of defence would be in pulling them. Not a word. Partly this is because the general lay impression around here is that this is a very well drafted bill.

It also illustrates the exposed and isolated position of Douglas Hurd. He belongs with all this minimal-minded repressing and suppressing like Mozart at a Wembley rally. Indeed one longs for him to become Home Secretary. But this bill which we are promised — clearly no one in government has the blindest idea what form it will take. But if it is either an attempt by subterfuge to make the law even harsher or alternatively a deliberate nonsense intended for abandonment 1979-style to provide the monotonous defence line "We introduced legislation", what will then happen to Mr Hurd? Truly I do not think him so devoted to office that he could long continue. Mr Hurd should be paid the compliment of our thinking him capable of preferring to go. The impression at present is of someone playing for time.

But so well has Mr Shepherd made his case, so manifestly has he assembled a coalition of the non-servile, the non-imperious and the non-hysterical that neither he nor his cause will go away. The nature of politics is changing under our eyes. Conservative domination on the economy is an established fact. But the twitchy imperiousness of Mrs Thatcher is pushing her to the limits of self-parody and her colleagues to the last fibre of their self-respect. Argument starts at the Official Secrets Act but it goes on, as Mr Heath implied, to embrace wider freedoms, taken for granted in America.

The time has come for us to recognise the wisdom of Thomas Jefferson between whom and the Freedom of Information there flows an apostolic line. The want of freedoms which the Americans receive on general issue has always been a British deficiency. It is the educational function of Mrs Thatcher's premiership to have illustrated the fact. □

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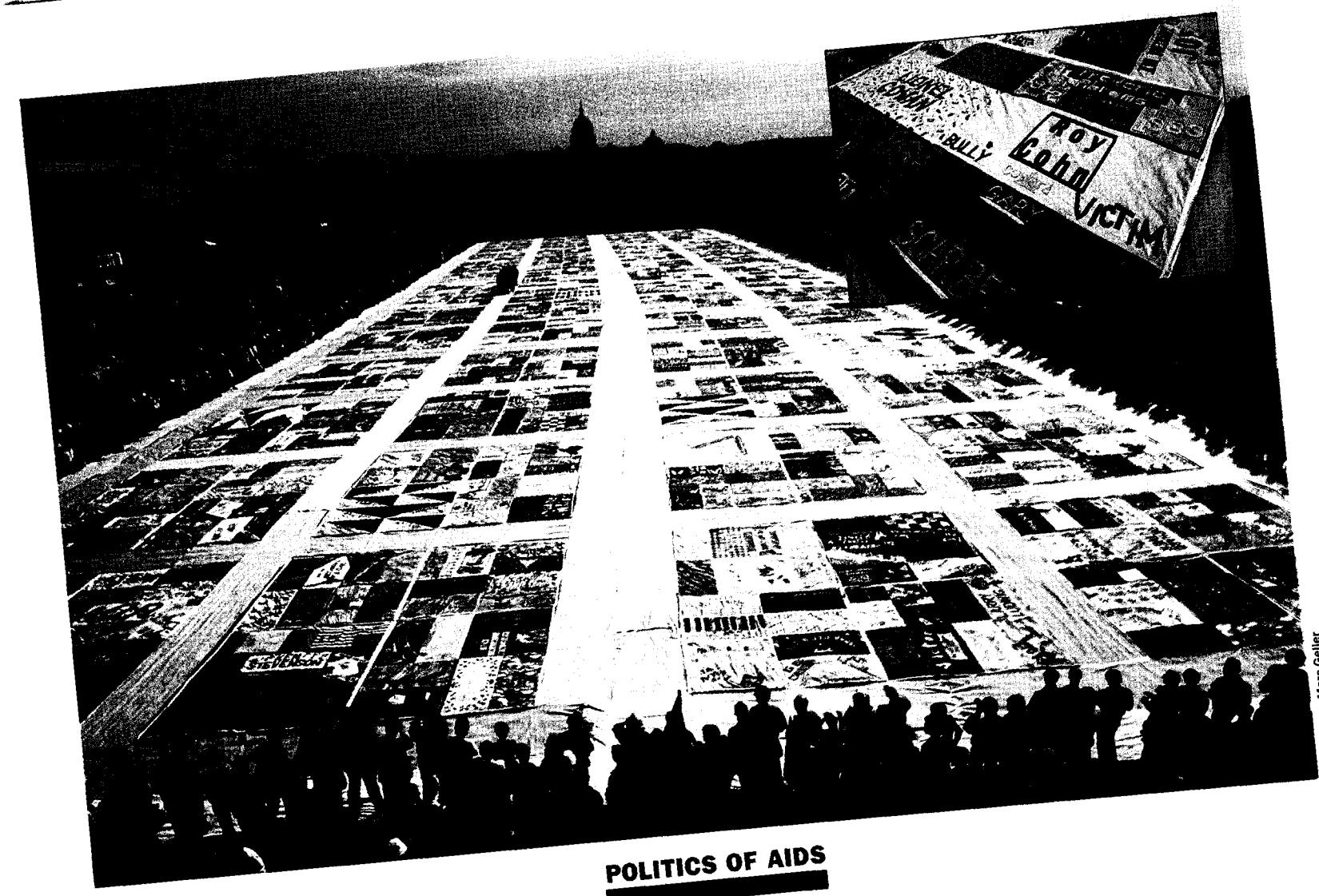

Both photos: Marc Geller

POLITICS OF AIDS

1,227 — and counting

By the mid 1990s, US government bigotry and indifference will have left more Americans dead than were killed in the second world war.

DUNCAN CAMPBELL *reports on the knife-edge politics of Aids in Britain, and the continuing threat of political exploitation of the disease that threatens to put lives at risk around the world for decades to come*

SAN FRANCISCO. 23 November 1987. Congresswoman Barbara Boxer, participating in an examination of the Federal Response to Aids, was openly angry about the US government's continuing failure to launch a national health education programme:

> There are people in the White House who are guilty of murder. If you know the facts . . . and don't give them out, and don't have a good explanation why, you are guilty.

Boxer was referring to President Reagan's unwillingness, seven years into the epidemic, to authorise the distribution of health education advice, already written and printed, to American households. Why? The leaflets mention "condoms".

Republicans will soon be counter-attacking. Some 65 Senators and Representatives, who like Boxer have campaigned for urgent action on Aids, are on a Republican "hit-list" for de-election during this year's congressional elections. Such tactics were used before successfully — against liberal Senators during the 1970s.

The message is that Democrats are "soft on fags"; the Republicans, in contrast, the party that stands for family values. Republicans in the 1988 campaign anticipate exploiting events in the epidemic that could turn popular fears and prejudices into political capital and electoral advantage. Alarmed doctors and other professionals dealing with the epidemic warn that the damage may be huge; there will be not just the early deaths of hundreds of thousands already ill or infected, for whom research on treatment will then take no priority, but the preservation in the population as a whole of a pool of lethal virus, infecting and then slaying for years ahead.

The October 1987 March on Washington unveiled the Names Project quilt, a huge and colourful tapestry dedicated to and commemorating thousands lost to Aids

The same political forces are at work in Britain, where, last month, the total of Aids cases diagnosed totalled 1,227. In five years' time, if treatment is not available, the Aids toll in Britain is likely to have reached the present US level of 27,000 deaths. The health education programme, launched in 1986, will have had almost no effect; the dead will be substantially people infected in the earlier years from 1982 on, when British doctors and campaigners first warned an uninterested press and government of what was coming. The message was disregarded for four years.

The US crossed the same thousand cases threshold five years ago. Everyone dealing with Aids there is angry. Over 26,000 Americans have now died of Aids. Over 50,000 cases have been reported, and the numbers involved will rise by more than 1,000 each month this year. By 1991, some 250,000 Americans will be diagnosed with Aids and 190,000 will be dead from Aids. Some 50,000 are expected to die of Aids in that year alone.

Mandatory testing

The Republican line for the 1988 elections was forcefully argued a month ago in Rupert Murdoch's New York *Post* by former White

New Statesman 22 January 1988

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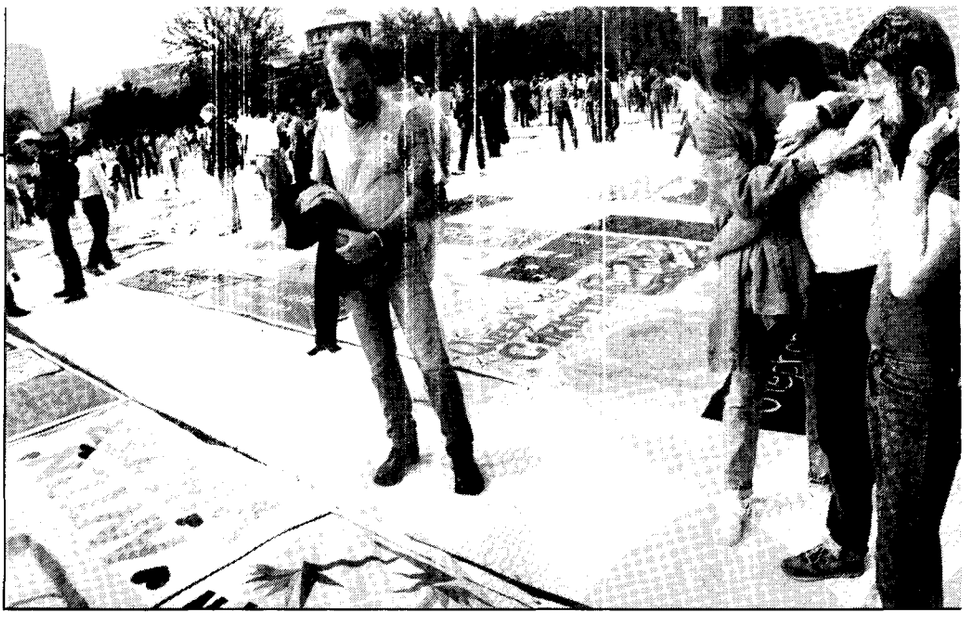

House communications director, Patrick Buchanan, a confidant of the right in the Reagan White House. "For years," he wrote, "the national Democratic Party has pandered to the homosexual lobby . . . in 1988, that Democratic Party should be dragged into the court of public opinion as an unindicted co-conspirator in America's Aids epidemic." The right's "solution" is not treatment, but mandatory testing, quarantine and control. Massive testing is the only suggestion that Reagan has ever publicly offered for the prevention of Aids, offering the illusion of action in order to overcome the moralists' scruples about issuing blunt advice on sexual behaviour.

In Britain, too, cries from the right for mandatory testing are just as insistent, though not yet as public. In private policy papers and tabloid newspaper polls, however, testing programmes are being pushed hard. The government's endorsement of the anti-gay and lesbian clause added last month to the Local Government Bill shows that right-wing exploiters of anti-gay sentiments and fears of Aids are now off the leash. So far, the Aids public education programme in Britain, which despite deadly delays has won high international praise, is exempt from this tide of prejudice. But for how long?

The "Aids establishment" — right-wing code on both sides of the Atlantic for an amalgam of those facing HIV disease, and those researching or treating it — is under attack. (HIV, the Human Immunodeficiency Virus, is the cause of Aids.) The private agenda of the Conservative right has been spelt out in a policy paper, "The Aids Report", prepared last year by former Downing Street advisers, a copy of which has been obtained by the *New Statesman*. The report was written by Christopher Monckton, who worked for four years in the Downing Street policy unit, and was published by Policy Search in Tufton Street, Westminster. Policy Search, a right-wing lobby group, is run by Sir Alfred Sherman, a former top Thatcher adviser.

Monckton's report demands mandatory annual blood tests for the entire population from 13 to 65. "Quarantining of Aids carriers might be neccessary" as "a last resort". Airing wild speculation that unspecified mutations of the virus could lead to its becoming newly contagious through airborne infection, Monckton suggested that four million people in Britain will be infected, ill or dead by the end of the century.

The views of the recently ennobled Chief Rabbi, Immanuel Jakobovits, indicate how right-wing opinion is moving. He wants adultery and homosexuality criminalised, and has suggested that, unless stopped, people infected with HIV will "breed the desire to seek safety in numbers . . . by deliberately spreading the contagion". Norman Fowler's Aids prevention policy was "immoral", Jakobovits told the Commons Social Services Committee last year. "It tells people not what is right, but how to do wrong and get away with it".

The argument about replacing treatment programmes with screening and quarantine, says Professor Michael Adler of the Middlesex Hospital and a member of the "Aids establishment", has not been resolved for all time. "A new scare campaign could turn government policy round very quickly indeed. It's an area we have to be very attuned to. We can't be sure it won't surface again, and take off overnight . . . you'll get explosions."

A major part of the right's attack on the "Aids establishment" is the claim, echoed in the United States by Buchanan, that Aids will not "break out" into the heterosexual population. The general threat has been overstated, they say, played up by gays, sufferers and their friends, whose hysteria may safely be ignored.

In fact, HIV infection is now no longer spreading significantly among US gay men, following profound and dramatically effective changes in their sexual behaviour. But it is now endemic in other parts of the community. The second major wave of HIV infection in the United States is taking place right now, nurtured by the near-total inadequacy of health education, in the South Bronx and nearby districts of New York. Those affected are men and women of colour, blacks and hispanics, and they are poor. Many or most are drug injectors. They are at least as easily stigmatised and marginalised as white gay men, and far less articulate.

But the US administration is "doing the same with junkies" as they once did with gay men, according to one leading US Aids epidemiologist. They are continuing to pretend that the epidemic still need not concern ordinary middle-of-the-road, middle-class white Americans, "because no one is dying in the suburbs of Virginia and Maryland".

> ***"The stage is set to portray the epidemic as a panic incited by gays and their Democratic supporters"***

The stage is set to portray the Aids epidemic as a panic incited by homosexuals and their Democratic supporters. White House officials have already taken the first step in encouraging this line of argument, by announcing a month ago that official estimates of the level of infection in the US would shortly be reduced. The last published estimates, from 1986, suggested that 1.5 million Americans had been exposed to the HIV virus. The new estimates could run as low as less than half a million, and could be announced at a time convenient to Republican campaign strategy. So, said the White House, since the scale of the problem had been overestimated, there was no need to expand Aids funding in the coming year.

Wilderness years

In Britain, as in the United States, clinicians and researchers who were the first to tackle Aids recall with despair and pain the wilderness years when they tried to warn and counsel, and were tragically ignored. "It was a nightmare for all of us," says Dr Andrew Moss, chief epidemiologist at San Francisco General Hospital. It was clear to him then that a "vast chunk of homosexual men in America were going to die" if no action was taken. Three years ago, he warned the first Congressional enquiry into Aids that "the homosexuality of 70 per cent of the cases [had] frightened off the funding agencies", and destroyed any chance that "preventive measures might have held the disease down to 10 or 15 per cent of the gay population instead of the 45 or 50 per cent that have now met the Aids virus".

The British experience has been similar. "Four years ago," says Professor Michael Adler of the Middlesex Hospital, "we were beating our heads against the wall, against complacency, trying to drag politicians with us".

The charge against the White House of murderous neglect has been levelled most cogently in a massive study of the epidemic by San Franciscan journalist Randy Shilts, *And The Band Played On*. The book is both an intimate account of those fighting the disease, and a well-documented indictment of the considered inaction of a White House that preferred advice on Aids prevention from fundamentalist preachers like Jerry Falwell rather than from its own Surgeon-General.

The White House's inability to defend its inactivity on Aids was highlighted in November when CBS television's *Sixty Minutes* programme featured Shilts's book. No one would defend administration policy to CBS. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) "highly recommended" that their staff said nothing. The Deputy Assistant US Secretary for Health was authorised to respond, and then de-authorised. The Secretary of State for Health could not find any free date in his 1987 diary on which to be interviewed for America's most-watched current affairs programme. Another White House official had his authorisation to be interviewed withdrawn even while a CBS TV crew were driving to his office. Finally, the White House suggested that

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Marc Geller

On the scale of a wartime cemetery, with a message of unnecessary suffering no less powerful, the Names Project displays a diversity of love, celebration and grief in individual panels giving the name of a lost lover, son, daughter, or friend. Most American gay men do not now expect to live to see the end of the century. Networks of friends and whole communities have been decimated. Worse is to come. The scale of death has become numbing, almost incomprehensible. Marchers shouted "Shame, shame, shame" at the White House — shame that the leaders of the wealthiest nation on earth could wantonly allow people to die. (Duncan Campbell)

CBS talk to Surgeon-General Everett Koop, who *opposes* the White House's policies, and wrote the leaflets on Aids that the White House still refuses to have distributed.

Most telling of all was the "advice" given to Dr Donald Francis, a CDC official now coordinating California's Aids programmes, not to take part. Francis had been one of the earliest to see that thousands of deaths could be avoided by health education. He repeatedly asked for funds to get Aids prevention under way; sums now trivial in comparison to the exponentially growing costs of the epidemic. His memoranda were never answered.

Reagan first spoke about Aids in public in March last year, at the Washington international Aids conference, but said nothing about treatment or research, only testing. And until Rock Hudson died in 1985, the press were equally silent. Shilts records angrily that in the US, "Major news organisations have literally let the Reagan administration get away with murder".

With the Surgeon-General's pamphlets on Aids still locked in government warehouses, the earliest date the general US public will get any Aids prevention advice is this June. Other Aids prevention and public health initiatives have been severely damaged by an amendment to the Congressional Aids bill last October, proposed by Senator Jesse Helms. The Helms amendment prohibits the use of federal Aids funds by any group issuing material that may "promote, encourage or condone homosexual sexual activities". If Helms gets his way, nothing may be paid for by the US government that admits the existence of any sort of sexual activity "outside of a sexually monogamous marriage".

The larger Republican strategy for the 1988 elections was discussed by some of Helms' supporters in California last September. A group led by Californian Republican Congressman William Dannemeyer planned to select and target Democratic politicians over Aids, and to exploit issues in the Aids epidemic to "help us to gain ground in '88."

Global strategy

In London this Sunday, a March for Aids and Civil Rights, and a press conference the next day, precede the first-ever World Health Organisation meeting on Aids. Health ministers from WHO states meet on Tuesday to plan a "global strategy" to curb Aids. The meeting is deliberately focused on education, information and counselling, rather than control. The omens for a humane response to the epidemic remain good, the EEC having recommended against compulsory screening two months ago.

But some states have taken matters into their own hands. Cuba has introduced a mandatory testing programme, and had by October put 141 people in a quarantine "sanatorium". The Cuban government claims that the policy is being implemented with "human dignity". But the country has an ugly record of illiberal actions towards homosexuals, who were for a period in the 1960s rounded up and placed in labour camps.

In Bavaria, there are already the first signs of a pogrom. A May 1987 decree from the government of Franz-Josef Strauss permits the compulsory blood-testing of "suspected carriers", and the subsequent compulsory exclusion from social contact (by means unspecified) of those found to have been exposed to the virus. Following the decree, state police started raiding gay premises and homes, removing the occupants for compulsory blood tests. Hundreds at least have seen how the Bavarian wind is blowing, and moved out as refugees to Berlin, Hamburg, or other German cities.

The German magazine *Tempo* last year chillingly showed how far such developments might go. They re-labelled and redrew the plans of the Nazi Sachsenhausen concentration camp, and displayed it for public consideration as an Aids Medical (isolation) Centre. Although the plans were virtually identical, from arrival bays to guardrooms and crematoria, no one spotted the hoax. Even quite liberal local authorities reportedly approved the plan.

Quarantine camps are also back on the agenda in California this autumn, following the re-emergence of a scheme by right-wing extremist Lyndon LaRouche to have Aids (inaccurately) declared a contagious disease, and subject to legal quarantine provisions. LaRouche previously promoted a ballot on this issue in 1986, but lost by a substantial majority. However, no one in California now campaigning against LaRouche's "Proposition 2" is sure what direction the politics of Aids has taken since then.

Obscenity

Although the British health education campaign is rightly admired, the government's silence, ignorance and disregard lasted almost as long as that of the Reagan administration. No one from the DHSS bothered to attend the first or second conferences of the Terrence Higgins Trust, Britain's first and leading Aids charity. Indeed, from early in 1984, government action against the gay community (the Customs raid on the *Gays The Word* bookshop) specifically prevented the importation to Britain of a wide range of information in US gay newspapers about necessary "safe sex" practices, and even medical books on Aids. In order to advise Health Secretary Norman Fowler, the government's Chief Medical Officer, Sir Donald Acheson, had to have US safe sex publications smuggled to him via the diplomatic bag.

Many useful publications and video material are still banned from Britain because they are too explicit — and hence allegedly obscene.

Clinicians and hospitals now dealing with Britain's Aids epidemic feel relatively — but only temporarily — secure. Last year it appeared that the life-preserving, but expensive, drug AZT would be withdrawn or denied to some Aids patients because of DHSS drug restrictions; public rows ensued and the DHSS suddenly came up with stop-gap funds. But, says Professor Adler, "We've had to shroud-wave ways to get money for AZT". Adequate funds appear to have been secured for 1988, but he and his colleagues remain uncertain of what the future holds. Resources could suddenly dry up again. Aids is only being managed, with difficulty, because political pressure has resulted in separate but specific funding from the DHSS to each health region dealing with Aids. If the separate Aids budgets do go, the general crush on the health services will supervene, and units like Adler's special ward at the Middlesex Hospital may face sudden closure, even as the caseload doubles every ten months. The House of Commons Social Services Committee last year pressed the need for long-term strategic funding over five to ten years, but the government has yet to respond.

Most important of all is funding research to develop vaccines, and particularly anti-viral treatments which can stop HIV infection turning into Aids. A drug which does that will be costly to find, and probably very costly to prescribe. But it will repay its costs many times over, saving billions of pounds in treatment costs as well as the lives of productive individuals. But funding for research, despite the evident long-term financial benefits alone, remains parsimonious. A modest £5 million plan by the Medical Research Council to expand research on Aids was wholly rebuffed by Lord Whitelaw's cabinet committee on Aids a month ago. Use existing resources, the MRC was told.

By the end of this decade, Britain, trailing a few years behind the United States, will be at 5,000 plus deaths — and counting. Aids experts in the medical community say that they are "nervous about the backlash that could come at any time — politically and in research terms. You have to have eyes in the back of your head in this job."

But in its second decade, the 1990s, Aids will become a predominantly heterosexual disease, just like any other sexually transmitted disease. If the people who face infection then are to be saved, therapies and vaccines have to be developed now. That can only be done with ample funding, as well as with the help of the disease's earliest and most stigmatised group of victims. In the longer run, we cannot leave the Aids (HIV) virus potent and at loose to imperil and injure future generations. It represents the greatest of all threats to civil liberties, the failure to succour life itself. □

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The Alliance impaled on Jenkins's Fork

SARAH BENTON *analyses the contradictions exposed by the Liberal-SDP merger talks*

THE ODDS ARE that the Liberal-SDP merger will go ahead, not because the leaders got it right last Monday where they had got it disastrously wrong six days before, but because the pressure for merger is so strong that the members would have kept on pressing and pressing until whatever was squeezed out looked acceptable.

The man whose vision had seemed close to implosion all week and who, only six months ago in Portsmouth was still being hailed as the greatest statesman of them all, has been wholly absent from the casualty-strewn battlefield of the merger talks. He is Roy Jenkins, who pioneered the argument that the two-party system in Britain must be broken by the upsurge of a third, centre force. Before the talks, the Liberal Party embraced Jenkins's view — and the idea that what Britain needs is a coherent radical party *of the left* to lead the opposition to Conservatism!

The party had never been under enough pressure to have to choose exactly where it stood. During the talks, the two positions became quite incompatible. It is an incompatibility which David Steel, chucking threadbare phrases about the "radical centre" at the word-hungry mob, could not or would not come to terms with.

Roy Jenkins was fine in the role of John the Baptist, but the Alliance parties drew a disruptive Messiah in David Owen. The danger for Jenkins's vision was that if Labour did indeed lose its dominance over all anti-Conservative forces, it would make room for neither a coherent force of the centre, nor of the left, but for *all* of the disparate radical ideas that, 60 years ago, were equal contenders for the messianic role. Labour hasn't lost its dominance, though it's still insecure, but Owen has ripped the centre-left alternative to shreds.

Roy Jenkins, David Steel and Bob Maclennan are all quite capable of producing statesmanlike speeches, and even adroit policy statements. Making a new party, meaning welding together a force of people in the land behind a shared political imperative, is something else again. That possibility falls on the shoulders of a single person only when those around are so impatient with the discourse of politics that they will invest all in the personality of the leader. The Liberal Party, with its tradition of grassroots survival, has few such members. The SDP has many. The Conservative Party has even more.

Last week saw a crisis of ideas, of political position and of leaders and led. Discontent had been brewing from the moment Liberals first caught a glimpse of the constitutional changes, that is from the moment merger became a reality. By the time the policy statement was produced, a disgruntled tide was pressing in on the frail plans, looking for a weakness. The only surprise when it burst through the shaky constructions of Maclennan and Steel was that the breach was made by the Liberal MPs.

Paddy Ashdown e-merges

Steel's fall from grace, in which Alan Beith has been sourly implicated, has opened the way for Paddy Ashdown to be leader of the Liberal Party or a merged party. Like David Owen, he knows when to leave the engineers to get crushed under the machine they are trying to construct. It has also opened the way for the grassroots prophets and messiahs. Just off Whitehall last Sunday, 50 Liberals met and convinced each other that organised opposition to the merger was feasible. But the fact that so far they have only spoken of a blocking one-third vote shows that they, too, recognise that there is a strong drive for merger inside the Liberal Party.

For all David Steel's famed remoteness from his

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own party, he is more aware than some Liberals of just how conservative many of their fellows are. A mythically mad, bad, black Bernie Grant, Labour leader of Haringey Council, is as much a nightmare for the gentle Liberals of Tring as for the snarling Tories of Billericay. *They* don't want to replace Labour as the party of radical change. Like the SDP, they stand for good sense and decency and keeping socialism in its place. Many will vote for merger, almost regardless of terms, fearful that if the centre does not hold British politics will either fall to the two monoliths of extremism, Labour and conservatism, or that all non-Toryism will fracture into clusters of fanatics. Unfortunately for them, they lack a leader with political nous or demagogic skills.

Lacking in demagogic skills and even any apparent personable qualities, but nonetheless "representative", we have Tony Greaves. He is all that the SDP hate, from his woolly socks to his thriving beard. He put his position in the *Guardian* last Friday: what we require, he wrote, is that "the SDP accept that we will remain Liberals . . . There is nothing wrong in politics with being unpopular if you are right in relation to basic values and objectives. There is everything wrong in being popular and wrong. That is why the key to success must be a strategy firmly based on the Liberal values of freedom, justice and community, the dispersal of power, the fostering of diversity, and tolerance and the nurturing of creativity."

This is a smug and vacuous statement for anyone looking for political specifics. But it is the age-old plea for tolerance from religious non-conformists; they know they are right, they ask only the right to practise their ideology in the way they wish, gaining converts if they can. It is politics as social identity and moral stance, not as a strategy for action and change. Of all the positions, this is the one which most infuriates the SDP leadership. The SDP's parliamentary candidates, remembering the election, are more appreciative of that Liberal commitment. But many of them spoke sourly last week of the impossibility of reaching definite agreement with Liberals on anything; such is the diversity of view, the distrust of leaders, that a decision by one group can always be overturned by another.

Over the weekend, one Liberal did offer a speech of startingly messianic language, rich in political positions. It was Simon Hughes, the nice sensible MP who soared into Bermondsey on the wave of revulsion against startingly left-wing, and gay, Labour candidate Peter Tatchell. Simon Hughes chose to raise his flag last Saturday at the London School of Economics, where posters urging support for this Liberal MP, who speaks as a Christian, nudged the edges of posters urging opposition to that Liberal MP David Alton, who speaks as a Christian, and all his Tory admirers.

Wearing a glitteringly white jersey with a sort of russet trellis-work (the *Daily Mail* got the innuendo better) he was almost indistinguishable from his old Bermondsey rival. It was not his "communitarian" environmentalist specifications that would have raised the alarm of "marxist loony" in the good old days of 1982. It was his insistence that any new party must be home to "pacifist and unilateralist, those who believe in a sustainable economy and no growth, those who believe in the abolition of national boundaries and national armies, those who believe in the fundamentally shared possession that is land and the wrongness of private land ownership, those who are opposed to inherited wealth and to consumer-dominated demand-led economics." It is a sign of the times that he said that this was the message brought by Jesus, and he wanted to bring it too.

I didn't join the Liberal Party to become a member of the establishment, he said — unnecessarily — but to transform it. And that has led him to his decision, he will support a new party only if it has "fundamentally the same philosophy" that Liberals (well, some of them) have now. Otherwise, he would rather stand as a candidate supported jointly by Greens and the remaining Stay-True Liberals. There are, he believes, three other Liberal MPs who would make the same choice.

This is realignment not of the centre but of the left. It means regrouping all those environmentalists, anti-nuclear, freethinking spirits who dislike Labour's stodgy, hierarchical forms—the compromises Labour has made with trade unions and state power—into a new alliance. This might be music to David Steel's ears. He might even have produced that policy statement in order to achieve this. But nobody, including Simon Hughes, credits him with such political deviousness.

It is a dream of realignment that has certainly seduced many socialists who despair of the "labourism" of the Labour Party. Since Labour has lost its dominance over anti-Conservative forces, thousands have emerged to look for a political home, and failed to find it. The prospect of leading that new force excites Liberals, Greens, socialists and no doubt many others of the political groupings which flourished before radicalism made its pact with trade unionism and established its 50-year sway over the left.

When Roy Jenkins returned as a prophet to his own home, his argument was that the two-party system itself was responsible for Britain's economic and political decline by, among other things, forcing party leaders to promise their voters goods which they could not deliver. It was not an original argument and had been discussed by, in particular, the Labour-leaning intelligentsia. It has been taken seriously by Labour's most thoughtful right-winger, John Mackintosh, MP for Berwick and East Lothian, who died before Jenkins gave his Dimbleby lecture in 1979. It is Mackintosh's friend, protegé and one-time Labour MP, David Marquand, who has been the SDP's intellectual in the negotiations. He was one of its two drafters of the preamble for the new party (rejected by the Liberals at Northampton) and joined the emergency three-man team which redrafted a policy statement last weekend.

"Courageous newness"

This critique of the two-party system was enthusiastically adopted by David Owen (though not by Bill Rodgers). But if it began in intellectual conviction, it dwindled into self-justification, and left too many Social Democrats crying "new", and "courageous", without having any sense of whether the newly courageous proposal had any intrinsic merits. The words were more like the garlic cloves to ward off the devils of the parties they might have joined. The notion of "courageous newness" is still the will-o-the-wisp they chase.

If David Owen has indeed been the ghost whose sardonic smile and mocking words have curdled the political sense of the negotiators, this is as much a comment on the muddle and dependence of his members as on the strength of the man himself. He has chosen them and they he.

Personality, in their leader and their opponents, has been substituted for political direction. It is this which prompted some commentators to reach for analogies between David Owen and Oswald Mosley. On nearly all points the analogy is inappropriate and insulting. On one it is apposite, and that is the way in which attempts to storm the barricades protecting "old politics" and the "old gangs" (the language used by Mosley and Hitler) thrust a defiant sincerity onto the high ground of politics. Mrs Thatcher and feminism have both dipped into this inversion of the personal and political. It works best when there is a personality onto whom such qualities of painful truth-telling can be projected. They become the carriers and the incarnation of a vague, and ineffable discontent with public life.

That is only part of the story. There are also thousands of Social Democrats, who, like the Liberals, are determined to merge because there is simply no alternative. As Suzan Neale, an SDP candidate in Warwickshire North, said: "The grassroots in both parties with very rare exceptions feel this is what the country needs." It should, she said, be a "strong middle force" which is "leaning to the left". But, she added, "not just of the centre; sensible".

Perhaps when Steel and Maclennan cried that VAT on children's clothes is the radical, adventurous rallying cry that the country wants, they picked up the wrong speech. They would have solidified their middle ground with the statesmanlike claim that these policies are merely sensible, rational and decent—and nothing whatsoever to do with political change. □

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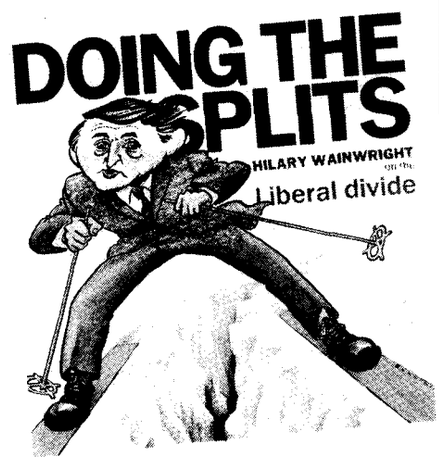

A WEEK before the Liberal-SDP merger talks came apart so dramatically, Hilary Wainwright analysed the forces pulling the Liberal Party in different directions (*NS* 8 January). If you want to know what's going on before David Steel does, buy the *New Statesman*. ●

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The end to Lawson's boom

Britain's banks have been financing Lawson's boom with staggering largesse. But the stock market crisis will curb their lending power and bring the government's privatised reflation to an end just when the world outlook is worsening.

WILL HUTTON ***invokes Keynes to look at Britain's economic position and finds few reasons to be cheerful. Unless, that is, you can afford to invest in gilts***

SMALL WONDER that economists are so disregarded. Here we are after a worldwide stock market crash, a 50 per cent devaluation of the American dollar and a singular breakdown of any attempt at collaborative international economic management — and economists debate how rapidly the economy will continue to grow.

One school — the rump of the old monetarists — opines that the British economy is in danger of overheating and finds no sign of any international weakness. Another — the "cheerleaders", dutiful followers of official fashion — argues that while some slowdown is in prospect, it is a natural evolution and nothing to be concerned about. And then there is a ragbag of pessimists, trusting in astrological data, Kondratieff wave cycles*, and shattered nerves to foretell awful events; "what they are they know not; but they shall be the terrors of the earth".

Poor broken-backed economics has come to this; with no coherent shared body of theory at hand to explain the world, punditry of every persuasion rules.

What sense can be made of current events — and what might they mean for our economic and political future? It's a time for a return to first principles. Plainly, the simple axioms pinned on the idea that the market is always rational and always works need reappraisal. Was the market rational at 9 o'clock or five o'clock on 19 October? And equally is a free foreign exchange market, with lots of actors and plenty of information, the near-perfect real world embodiment of a theoretical perfect market, producing economically best results with a yen:dollar rate of 250 or 120?

Any search for clues leads straight to the disregarded and out-of-fashion Lord Keynes. Markets, he argued, work — but not as economists theorised they do. Keynes's contention was simple, but fundamental. Prices today do not tell us what is going to happen tomorrow; and because we are human, they are as much a barometer of our greed and fear about what tomorrow might bring, as any proxy for economic scarcities and consumer preferences. The dollar will rise to 250 against the yen and the Dow Jones reach 2722, driven by overblown enthusiasm rather than forces pressing the economy on to some best point of balance. Money is at the heart of Keynesianism. When you have money, you can buy or sell what you don't have. Money allows greed and fear to be operationalised as market influences, allowing overborrowing and overspending, or, conversely, underborrowing and underspending, and sending the markets that constitute the economy into all kinds of misalignments and tailspins.

> ***"The basic Keynesian proposition: economic instability originates in the operation of the financial system, and if the wealth-generating capacities of a market economy are to be delivered, then it must be financially manipulated"***

Backwash

But if money is the root of market instability, it is the financial system that will both feel the backwash of the unstable eddying and flowing — and be its principal cause. And so to the basic Keynesian proposition: economic instability originates in the operation of the financial system, and if the wealth-generating capacities of a market economy are to be delivered, then it must be financially manipulated. Keynes's advice on the policy content of this manipulation varied in his career from aggressive management of interest rates and the national debt to the wholesale "socialisation" of the whole caboose. But his basic message remained the same. The cause and the remedy is *finance*.

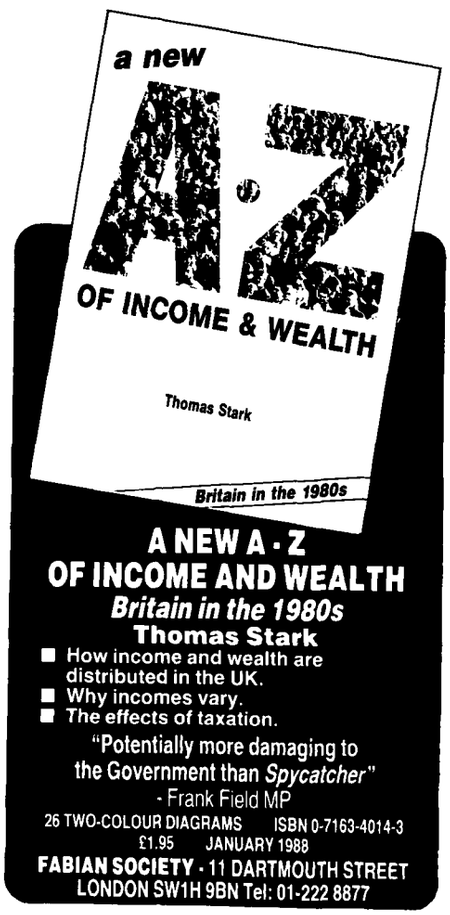
The conventional interpretation of Keynesianism — advocacy of reflation and government "fine-tuning" — is thus but a subclass of the more general proposition. For the financial consequence of increased public spending and lower taxation is higher public borrowing and more sales of the national debt — and what is this but a means of manipulating the financial system? This, then, is the general Keynesian injunction, but there is more than one route to the same destination — as the economic and political history of the last few years demonstrates.

The government, it is alleged, has only achieved its economic success through covertly reflating in an orthodox Keynesian manner (privatisation paying for tax cuts and disguising the true increase in public borrowing). But despite all the energy with which such claims have been pressed, they have lacked resonance. The government has shrugged them off. Why? Quite simply, because they are wrong. Four or five years ago the government was borrowing some £10 billion a year; next year it could repay up to £3.4 billion of the national debt if it chose. And every year since 1979 the government has aimed to lower borrowing the following year, failing only twice.

No covert public reflation here. Yet reflation there has been. Over the last 18 months while the growth in public debt has slowed to a trickle — the PSBR being reduced from £6 billion to zero — the British clearing banks have increased their lending from £93 billion (February 1986) to £129 billion (August 1987). Never before has there been an increase of this magnitude in British economic history. It is utterly staggering. Had an opposition party in power supplemented the growth in the public sector, the overstimulation of the economy could have been calamitous. The government has in effect privatised reflation.

Three elements have contributed towards the boom:

- a rising stock market and buoyant Eurobond market, which have enabled the banks to raise large sums of capital with which to underwrite the explosion in their lending; ▷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*the doctrine that there are 55-year cycles of boom and bust, and that 55 years or so on from 1931 we are on the threshold of another bust.

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☐ deregulation, which has allowed the banks into areas of lending formerly forbidden (mortgages, the stock market, the financial sector in general), but above all has allowed even better terms for all classes of credit, especially the length of time over which personal credit is extended;
☐ the spreading appetite for borrowing, fuelled to a degree by rising real wages and perhaps more generally by a *zeitgeist* of greed.

These have been years of the bigger your mortgage, the bigger your capital gains; the devil take the hindmost, the person whose mortgage is less than four times his or her earnings. And so the borrowing and spending has grown — and with it the national economy. The financial system *sui generis* has been the source of a privatised reflation.

This is an analysis in line with Keynes, if not most Keynesians. It carries a most important corollary. The financial system can equally be a cause of deflation; and after the stock market crash that is now what could be in prospect — not only in Britain, but globally.

Parallel with 1929

In Britain, the processes of privatised reflation have been reversed. The Eurobond markets, on which the banks raised billions of pounds, have made it plain that for the time being they want no more paper. Equally, the stock market has become prohibitively expensive as a provider of capital. If it took the issue of one share to raise a pound before 19 October, it now takes nearly two; a dramatic deterrent to raising capital here. The banks are going to have to make do with the capital they have to underwrite their new lending; just at the moment when some of the consequences of their recent enthusiasms are coming home to roost.

In the United States and Japan banks are prohibited from meddling directly in the stock market. Both countries have worried that losses in stock market transactions could affect the banks' ability to lend to their ordinary industrial and personal customers. Suppose a bank owned a stockbroking subsidiary which was hit by a sudden collapse in share prices. The subsidiary would hold shares, financed by the bank, which would be lower in value; it might even have clients that it had chosen to help make large acquisitions by buying and holding large blocks of their shares — again now lower in value. The Americans saw how involvement of this type enfeebled their banks' ability to lend after the 1929 crash; and the 1933 Glass-Steagall Act prohibited combining the two functions under the same banking roof — a prohibition which American banks have recently campaigned to have lifted, notwithstanding the recent proof of its wisdom.

Yet in Britain the prohibition has never existed. When stockbrokers went up for auction in the Big Bang, the bankers rushed to buy them. Now all of Britain's clearing banks are sitting on swingeing losses. Through one customer alone (Blue Arrow) the National Westminster has lost £49 million.

Losses of this magnitude have been seen before. What makes them telling is their unexpectedness — and the fact that the third world debt saga has simultaneously entered a new and dangerous phase. A series of American banks — the Bank of Boston, Riggs Bank, American Express and Security Pacific — have all increased the provisions for losses for loans to Latin America above the benchmark established earlier this year. Worse still, they are actually writing some of the debt off, charging it against their capital reserves.

There has been provisioning before; there has been reserving. But the losses have been potential, not actual. Once American, Japanese and European banks start recognising that they will never see up to half the $400 billion they have lent to Latin America repaid, and it is simultaneously difficult and expensive to raise new capital in stock markets, the financial system worldwide will become a potent source of deflation. And British banks, notwithstanding their other losses, cannot expect to be excluded.

This is the parallel with 1929 that has so far gone unremarked. It was not Hoover's budgetary policy that intensified the slump — he resisted a big tax increase until 1932. Nor was it a tight monetary policy — the Federal Reserve made titanic efforts to keep the money supply from contracting. The money supply, which is no more than the liabilities of the banking system, contracted because the banks called in their loans, the assets side of their balance sheet. The swingeing losses they had experienced in Wall Street obliged them to do so. They no longer had the capital to underwrite even the existing levels of lending. And the loans were easy to call in — three quarters of all farm mortgages were for fewer than five years and half of all home mortgages for less than three years.

When President Roosevelt said in his inaugural speech that he would throw the moneychangers out of the temple, there was not an American alive who did not understand what he meant and why. The American financial system itself had been a principal cause of the slump — and it needed reform. Which is exactly what Roosevelt delivered. In his first hundred days, the US came off the Gold Standard, passed the Glass-Steagall Act, consolidated the Federal Reserve System, invented the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (to lend long-term money to industry), the Home Owners Loan Corporation (to lend 25-year mortgages to home-owners), the Farm Credit Administration (to lend up to 40-year mortgages to farmers), the Securities and Exchange Commission, and the system of Federal Deposit Insurance.

Never has a financial system been so fundamentally redesigned so fast. And anticipating Nigel Lawson, Roosevelt tried progressively to reduce the budget deficit — cutting the veterans' pensions in April 1933. The budget deficit did not close; but it did not rise significantly either. Yet American output bounded ahead, puzzling monetarists and Keynesians alike (at least those who believe reflation can only come from higher government borrowing). The financial system that had provoked the slump was now working in reverse — to loud protests, it might be added, from the American financial community who regarded such government interference as Stalinistic communism (and despite the results, still do).

The United States is as indebted today as in 1929, and consumer and company debt is as short term — indeed more so, as the Rooseveltian framework has been progressively relaxed with the new fad for deregulation. Property, construction and credit card loans are ever more costly in terms of bad debts. The banks have not been hit directly by the crash, but the great investment banks-cum-security houses, like E.F. Hutton, have. And on top there is Latin America to contend with. The first Latin American defaults in 1931 were in Bolivia. Bolivia has now not paid any interest or principal on its debt for nearly four years.

These aren't the only deflationary pressures. In the summer of 1930, the US rushed to protect herself with the Smoot-Hawley tariff to make foreign goods more expensive, thus protecting American jobs and exporting, it was hoped, the worst of the recession. In 1987, the same result has been achieved with the devaluation of the dollar. America's public finances permit no public reflation; all the talk, now as then, is of limiting federal spending and borrowing. Reagan, like Hoover, has to find other means of limiting the impact of the financial crash. Who better than foreigners? Increasingly, it is a game of *sauve qui peut*.

Running amok

The financial system in the 1980s, as in the 1930s, can only take so much punishment. In Britain the fears are that bank lending is running amok — that growth of 5.6 per cent, maybe even 7 per cent, in the last months of 1987 is overheating the economy and a slowdown would be welcome. Yet the obverse of the fall in the dollar is the rise in the pound, which has deflationary consequences of its own. (Keynes had things to say about currencies, too, but there's a limit to how much one article can take.) Britain is almost certainly at the end of its privatised reflationary boom. And then there is the world outlook.

Britain's privatised boom has not changed long-running trends in the British economy. Roosevelt may, like Mrs Thatcher, have let the financial system generate its own momentum of recovery — but he had pre-designed it to push financial flows into investment rather than consumption. His New Deal financial system helped lift American productivity to world-beating levels for two generations; the same cannot be said for Britain in 1988. Here net domestic investment is running at 6 per cent of GDP, compared with 9 per cent in 1979 and an average of some 12 per cent in the 1960s — a weakness that is showing up in the trade figures as chronic import penetration and faltering export performance.

On a Keynesian analysis, 1989 and 1990 could be the worst two years in the world economy since the 1930s. Moreover, with the balance of payments prospect so weak, any British government would have to be cautious about launching a public reflation as the private reflation slows down. It could make the balance of payments deficit still worse. In short, we face a deteriorating world position with neither the undervalued currency of the Americans nor the inbuilt competitive advantages of the West Germans and Japanese.

Don't worry too much, though. Keynes could always be wrong. But to be on the safe side, buy some gilts — always a good bet if there's a major recession. He would have. Or would he have waited until after the sterling crisis? ☐

Will Hutton explores Keynes's view of the financial system in the Revolution That Never Was *(Longman, £5.95).*

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The selling of Star Wars to Europe

Star Wars was supposed to be the greatest US gift to Europe since the Marshall Plan. But now the Reagan Administration's Strategic Defense Initiative is not only obstructing a strategic arms accord; it is also undermining European trust in American leadership of the Western alliance. To woo European co-operation with SDI, Washington made extravagant promises. Today, those promises have evaporated and the Europeans are angry and disillusioned. **MARK SCHAPIRO** ***reports for InterNation***

THE MAN WHO best illustrates Europe's current predicament is Stanley Orman, head of the British SDI Participation Office. With a staff of 27 and an annual budget of £400,000, Orman directs the most ambitious effort yet to take the Pentagon's call for US-European co-operation at face value.

Each morning, when Orman arrives at his office in the Ministry of Defence, he proceeds according to two schedules: the hands of his black-and-gold Pulsar wristwatch tick off London time, while digital readout shows him the time in Washington. A flamboyant, jovial figure, Orman is the middleman between Britain's defence establishment and the Pentagon, and since his appointment, in March 1986, he has spent as much as a third of his time in the United States.

Thus far, Orman has little to show for his labours. Describing his early days on the job, he sounds like a travelling salesman. "When I started here I went to each of the contracting agencies in the DOD [US Defense Department] and laid out my store," he explains. "I went to the generals, the chief scientists and then to the junior staff who write requirements for proposals. The argument that I used is that we are the only ally with a broad background in all the technologies underpinning SDI." Orman also thought the US-British "special relationship" might help. "We are a trusted ally," he says, "and have proven capable of keeping each other's secrets."

Unfortunately, Orman says, "our knowledge of the US contract scene was too meagre to realise how difficult it would actually be." Last summer the House of Commons Defence Committee revealed that Britain had as yet received only $34 million in SDI research funds — an embarrassing 2.2 per cent of the $1.5 billion that former Defence Minister Michael Heseltine had suggested might flow to Britain for SDI work. The committee asserted that the main reason for this "disappointing performance" was the intrinsic difficulties that face companies trying to penetrate the American defence market." Top of the list were the "cumbersome Department of Defense bureaucracy and long-standing restrictions on technology transfer." According to an informal poll last year in the *Financial Times*, more than half of British defence contractors have lost faith that they will ever see a substantial amount of money from SDI and they have stopped trying to develop long-term proposals for Star Wars-related projects.

Any faith they did have they had to be persuaded to hold.

> ***"The Pentagon depicted SDI to the Europeans as little more than advanced research into a new defence system for military sites . . ."***

While many Americans were initially intoxicated by the sweep and boldness of SDI, most European leaders were shocked by the idea. The entire concept of SDI, challenging the traditional doctrine of deterrence, bordered on military heresy. European involvement in SDI was an afterthought; given 48 hours to review Reagan's speech, Secretary of State George Shultz hastily inserted a clause calling for "consultation" with the allies. Otherwise, there was no indication that Reagan was aware he was standing strategic doctrine on its head — or that this might concern the allies. "We didn't care about the Europeans at all then," says Hugh DiSantis, formerly with the policy planning staff of the State Department.

The strength of European opposition across the political spectrum, however, made ignoring the allies impossible. Still reeling from mass protests over the installation of the cruise and Pershing 2 missiles, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and West Germany's Defence Minister at the time, Manfred Wörner (recently named Secretary General of NATO), denounced the baroque character of SDI and the insensitivity of Reagan's timing. France, Denmark, Norway and Greece all announced their outright opposition to any co-operation with the Pentagon over SDI.

Carrot-and-stick approach

In early 1985, Washington began a sales drive to turn European opinion around — a move intended mainly for domestic political purposes. "The Reagan Administration had to show support from the allies to get Congressional support for the project," says Peter Sharfman, who conducted a study on SDI for the Office of Technology Assessment.

Like a band of tin men, the Administration's sales force, including Under Secretary of Defense Fred Iklé, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Policy Richard Perle, Lieut. Gen. James Abrahamson and Caspar Weinberger, hit the capitals of Europe. Combining classic military showmanship with implied threats and bribes, they aimed to create an irreversible momentum for SDI. The sales job involved creating two quite different images of the project, one for domestic and the other for foreign consumption. In the United States, SDI was the "Astrodome", the umbrella that would protect the population and introduce an era free from the threat of nuclear weapons. The Pentagon depicted it to the Europeans, however, as little more than advanced research into a new defence system for military sites, which would add new muscle to the doctrine of deterrence. The administration also played heavily on European fears of a new kind of US isolationism, one based on military supremacy in space.

One former State Department official described the effort as a "combination of beating [the Europeans] over the head with a stick while waving a carrot." It was to mollify fears of a Fortress America that one of President Reagan's early SDI study panels floated the idea of providing the allies with their own version of Star Wars, a missile defence system to protect Western Europe against incoming Soviet short- and intermediate-range weapons. Soon dubbed the European Defense Initiative (EDI), the plan helped soften the objections of German Defence Minister Wörner, who saw it as the European wedge into NATO. "It was through EDI that the Pentagon tried to get Europeans supportive of SDI," comments Martin McCusker, director of the Military Committee of the North Atlantic Assembly. "Even if they didn't believe in the concept, they'd get their own European system."

Yet scepticism remained; in April 1985 the allies unanimously rejected Caspar Weinberger's demand that they commit themselves to SDI within 60 days. Something else was clearly needed: the promise of money. General Abrahamson, head of the Strategic Defense Initiative Organisation and a man regarded by his colleagues as a superb salesman, flew to Europe armed with briefing books, threat assessments and science-fiction-style audiovisuals. Abrahamson's appeal was echoed by Weinberger, who suggested during a December 1985 trip to West Germany that SDI contracts might bring more than $1 billion to European industry.

The carrot-and-stick approach worked, at least temporarily. Britain was the first to sign an agreement on SDI with the United States, called a

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Chris Duggan

memorandum of understanding, or MOU. This occurred in December 1985, after Margaret Thatcher had obtained four concessions on Reagan's part. Thatcher's Four Points, as they came to be known, involved: framing SDI as a reinforcement of deterrence; maintaining the restraints of the ABM treaty, which severely confine SDI testing; limiting the project to research only; and consulting with the allies before any moves are made toward deployment. Even with those provisos, British support for SDI sparked a fierce Cabinet debate and a wave of protest in the scientific community. A top official of the government's biggest civilian high-tech research programme, ALVEY, resigned and hundreds of British scientists refused to work on any project associated with SDI.

West Germany and Italy in turn signed memorandums of understanding in March and September 1986, in each case after bitter internal debates. Only intensive lobbying from industrialists overcame opposition from within Chancellor Helmut Kohl's coalition. In Italy, according to S. Peter Worden, former special assistant to General Abrahamson, Bettino Craxi's government saw participation in SDI as a status symbol reflecting Italy's new position as one of the top five economic powers. Outside Europe, Japan and Israel signed on.

All these memorandums of understanding set forth procedures for industrial co-operation and new controls over the exchange of classified information, and listed technologies that might be provided by foreign contractors to the Star Wars effort. They contained no guarantees of funds for these overseas contractors, however. And each agreement was declared "secret in perpetuity".

Almost before the ink was dry on the allied agreements, the Reagan Administration began violating the promises that had induced the Europeans to support the project. In December 1986, President Reagan began to push for a broader interpretation of the ABM treaty to allow for wide-ranging SDI tests, despite the unanimous opposition of NATO member countries; Weinberger did not consult with the allies before announcing last February that certain elements of SDI were being accelerated past the research stage to ensure early deployment; and despite Abrahamson's flowery proclamations of US-European co-operation, his organisation has done little to protect European interests in the competition for Star Wars contracts.

A one-sided bargain

Across Europe, the sobering news is beginning to sink in. At one point European firms had hoped to garner at least 15 per cent of the total $26 billion proposed for SDI between 1985 and 1989. That budget has since been scaled down to $18 billion, and the Federation of American Scientists estimates that European contractors will be in the running for only 1 per cent of that total. In its 1986 report, the Italian Defence Ministry, which had vigorously supported SDI, concluded that "European firms have lost some of their interest in SDI as a result of the substantial reductions in the type and value of the research."

German industry, the leader in many of the technologies required by the Pentagon (such as optics, signal processing and fusion research), has been granted the largest volume of foreign contracts to date, totalling $44 million, according to the SDI Organisation. Yet there is disillusionment even there: Manfred von Nordheim, Washington representative of the aerospace giant Messerschmitt-Boelkow-Blohm, says bluntly, "Most German firms were sceptical from the beginning with regards to getting much money out of SDI. Now they see themselves reinforced in that scepticism."

Not only have top European officials complained to Washington that the SDI party never got off the ground, they also fear that the United States may have had a hidden agenda, using the project as a vehicle for raids on European technology by a US defence establishment that has lost its competitive edge.

> ***"The episode raises fundamental questions about the reliability of American leadership and willingness to tolerate European independence"***

Barely three months after the Thatcher government signed its Star Wars agreement, Whitehall was rocked by revelations of an attempted raid on British secrets by a Defense Department consultant named Clarence Robinson. *Jane's Defence Weekly* reported that Robinson had tried, without Ministry of Defence approval, to use his ties with Perle's Office of

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Security to obtain detailed plans of some of Britain's most sensitive defence projects, with the intention of adding them to the Pentagon's Militarily Critical Technologies List. Some European officials fear that this list — of things like computers and software that are banned from export to Soviet bloc countries — is used by the United States to harass other western countries' new-tech industries.

Because of the high degree of secrecy surrounding all this, European fears about American motives have only recently begun to surface. But last year, a National Academy of Sciences team, including one-time Defense Secretary Melvin Laird and former Central Intelligence Agency deputy chief Bobby Inman, harshly criticised the effect of new US export control policies. The team reported that the memorandums of understanding on SDI had prompted European concerns that "not only are they impeded in gaining access to the technology that would help Europe become competitive with the US and Japan but they are also hampered in their commercial applications of the technology (some of which they helped to develop)."

Stanley Orman and other European advocates of SDI are now forced to admit that the worst fears of the project's critics have been realised. Aside from EDI feasibility studies, which amount to some $25 million to $30 million, Orman says the only contracts likely to come Europe's way are through "teaming arrangements with American contractors". Under those arrangements, the primary contractor retains all rights to the final product and to any civilian spin-offs — or what one British IBM executive derisively called "drip-offs". Even in the event of a genuine European-US partnership, says Glyn Ford, author of an SDI study for the Science and Technology Committee of the European Parliament, much of the technology arising from SDI would be likely to end up classified and unavailable for civilian production.

> ***"Top European officials fear that the US may have had a hidden agenda, using SDI as a vehicle for raids on European technology by a US defence establishment that has lost its competitive edge"***

The deal struck over SDI was a one-sided bargain, leaving European enthusiasts scrambling for a windfall that refuses to materialise and a project that their own governments find more of a threat than a guarantee of security. As even the indomitable Orman concedes, "The time-scale is piffle, the concept of a perfect defence is piffle."

In the battle to sell SDI in Europe, the Reagan Administration may have won a Pyrrhic victory. Next time around there may be no Stanley Ormans eager to do Washington's bidding. At a time when the economic rules of the US-European relationship are changing fast, the episode raises fundamental questions about the reliability of American leadership and Washington's willingness to tolerate European independence. McCusker of the North Atlantic Assembly, for one, believes that the sour experience of SDI has been a vital factor in spurring the Europeans to break with traditional US dominance and develop defence strategies of their own.

Now, with the Reagan-Gorbachev INF agreement, which undermines the basic premise of European support for SDI, the distance across the Atlantic seems only to have widened. One Congressional official comments: "People have come through my office — MPs from Britain, the Defence Minister from the Netherlands — all complaining about SDI. [West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich] Genscher says it's all a joke — he doesn't like the fact that signing the MOU gave an imprimatur of German support for SDI . . . They're all asking, "Where are the contracts? Why did we sign this agreement?" □

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'Hungry people make poor shoppers'

YVONNE ROBERTS *reports a boom in women's books*

IF ONLY, in the film *Fatal Attraction*, Alex Forrest had lived next door to a bookshop instead of an abattoir. She could have wandered in and bought a dozen or so books — on a subject close to her heart: women who love too much. After an evening's reading, she would have realised why she had no need to do nasty things to a rabbit, or anyone else for that matter. A lifebelt would have been thrown, as some would see it, to save her from the consequences of her own liberation. And the outlook for single working women everywhere might have looked a little brighter. Or would it?

Fatal Attraction's pull is not some crude message about the price paid for female success, or the risks of adultery, or the sight of a woman, however demented, hitting back. It's because, in an extreme way, it portrays a woman trapped, a victim of a relationship over which she desperately wants control. She is a victim, not a victimiser. She wants him; he doesn't want her — and she hasn't got the means to understand why.

The reasons she doesn't understand her relationship are now the source of a whole new genre of books. It's a boom which reveals a rather sad secret at the heart of the Sisterhood. Middle-class women may have got their company cars, salaries, babies and nannies — but they haven't yet learnt how to keep their man or change him into the partner they imagine they really need. And now, they want to know why.

This week, the latest of many of these self-help guides is published. *Men Who Hate Women and The Women Who Love Them* is written by American psychologist Dr Susan Forward with Joan Torres (Bantam Press, £11.95). It describes what the publicity handout calls "a disturbingly familiar" character in the lives of contemporary women, "the misogynist".

Dr Susan Forward was once married to a misogynist. "He blamed me for everything from his business problems to the fact that his shoes weren't shined . . . He labelled me selfish and uncaring . . . and instead of being able to enjoy a joyous moment with the man who meant so much to me, I had to hide it for fear of upsetting him . . ." (Sounds familiar?)

Also recently published is *How to Love a Difficult Man* by Nancy Good ("Ask any woman if the man she's married to or involved with is difficult and the chances are she'll say yes . . .") and *Women Men Love, Women Men Leave* by Dr Connell Cowan and Dr Melvyn Kinder. Due out shortly is *Intimate Partners: Patterns in Love and Marriage* by Maggie Scarf and *A Woman's Guide to Men and Sex: How to Understand Men's Sexual and Emotional Needs* by Dr Andrew Stanway.

The self-help manuals' con

In 1963, Betty Friedan wrote *The Feminine Mystique* and referred to the domestic misery of middle-class housewives as "the problem without a name". Twenty-five years on, enough women friends and colleagues are going through break-ups, divorce and infidelity (their own and their partners), plus an awful lot of uncertainty as to what to expect from a relationship, for us to identify a new problem "without a name".

It's the problem of trying to have a successful heterosexual relationship built on the premise that, as the writer Barbara Ehrenreich puts it, women are people with the same needs for respect, for satisfying work, for love and pleasure as men. Or, to reduce it to the mundane, it's a problem about women who are beginning to wonder whether it's worth arguing for the third year in a row about who cleans the bath.

> ***'Women are people with the same needs for respect, satisfying work, love and pleasure as men'***

The con about all these self-help manuals is that while they do advise a woman on how she can stop being a victim, they cop out precisely at the time when, self-esteem restored, she needs to know *how* to navigate a healthy relationship, on terms acceptable to her and her partner.

The only clue she is given is "back off". Leave a man alone, don't nag, don't make demands, let him deal with his own problems (assuming he recognises he's got any). Don't complain if he's a workaholic. Simply smile sweetly and if he wants you, he'll change.

The message is not only anachronistic, it is also deeply selfish. In the 1960s, we had general guides on the nature and extent of sexism such as *The Female Eunuch* and we assumed it would all change as, united, we all became More Aware. In the 1970s, a hint of selfishness began to invade the process, as we were fed specific (and endless) advice on how to handle our bodies and our corporate careers.

Now, in the late 1980s, the popularity of these new books indicates a new attitude among some women totally in keeping with the Thatcherite times. Never mind the wider struggle, sod the other sisters. Let's practise a little self-interest, sit in our corner with half-a-dozen of these books and concentrate on our own salvation.

These new self-help manuals exercise a great attraction on the otherwise sane. In November a friend, not usually a soul in search of a cult, suggested that I read yet another book, *Women Who Love Too Much* by Robin Norwood (Arrow Books, £2.95). "Read it," she said, "and it will all click into place." I did and I almost thought it had — until I looked a little harder beyond the checklists and the charts.

The book, a pioneer in the genre, was first published in 1986, reprinted twice last year and has sold solidly over Christmas (a fertile time for "Whither Us?" introspection) — all on word of (mainly) feminist mouth.

Its formula is archetypal. First, the promise, in this case, on the cover: "A lifechanging book for women . . ." A book for "man junkies", for women with destructive patterns of relating to men. Its aim, the author explains, is to teach such women to change their lives. (Men too can become obsessional, Robin Norwood says, but many more of them have other ways to externalise their needs in work, sports, hobbies.)

Next comes the brief synopsis. A woman addicted to men blames herself for the relationship going wrong. If she can only find the key to making him happy, then he will change and become the man she wants. "By blaming ourselves, we hold on to the hope that we will be able to figure out what we are dong wrong and correct it, thereby controlling the situation and stopping the pain."

Is this the book for you?

"Hungry people," Robin Norwood points out, "make poor shoppers". Women who have had no relationship with themselves hardly know what to look for in somebody else.

Next comes the checklist. In *Women Who Love Too Much* it covers 15 characteristics and if you identify with any one (on page 10 if you want a quick flick through in the bookshop) — This Is The Book For You.

Among the characteristics of a woman who loves too much are: a childhood in which her own emotional needs were not met; a willingness to take more than 50 per cent of the blame in the relationship; a sense of low self-esteem; and a belief she has no right to be happy.

Women in emotional overdrive choose men who need help and who can guarantee a life of turmoil because, says Robin Norwood (echoed by Dr Susan Forward), they are addicted to pain, just as an alcoholic is addicted to booze. In order to recover, the first step is to back off from the partner. Stop nagging, stop making demands, stop wasting energy and begin concentrating not on his problems but on your own. Find a support group, "be selfish". Leave the relationship if necessary. All of which is fine — but the real question, unanswered, is who do you find to take his place?

Over 20 years ago, Betty Friedan wrote: "Man is not the enemy here but the fellow victim. The real enemy is women's denigration of themselves." It's the same message, unheard then, being preached again. It's a fairy story message which ignores the feminisation of poverty; the abandonment of families by men; the issues of physical and sexual abuse; men's flight from commitment; and the ambivalence of women themselves about what they want from life — a career, children, both, neither? All these questions are avoided in the manuals.

Many women do have a low sense of self-esteem and, in helping to restore it, these self-help guides may serve a purpose, but the danger comes when they assume that what happens to male partners is irrelevant. They assume that a woman, once "recovered", will *inevitably* find the man who treats her right. Surely the one lesson learnt already is that unless men *do* change on a significant scale (and who is to see to that?) then all the female self-esteem in the British Isles isn't really going to change the structure of life. □

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Mass Lobby of Parliament
Thursday 25 February

On Thursday 25 February there will be a Mass Lobby of Parliament to Save the NHS, when groups from all over the country will be meeting their MPs at the House of Commons to ask for the following four points:

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Private Health Insurance will not cover you for serious illnesses requiring long-term treatment, road accidents or any existing problems. The NHS is a very cost efficient and humane way to provide treatment and it has become the envy of the world. Unless it is revived now, we and our relatives are in grave danger of losing it.

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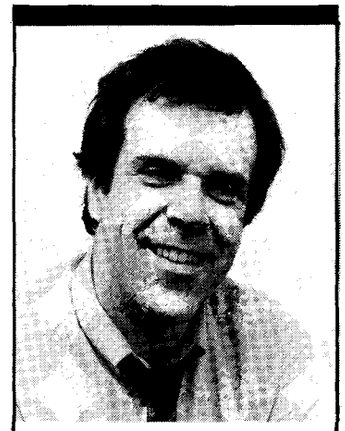

John Lloyd

Carbuncle on the nation's rump

"I HAVE JUST SEEN six very recent films . . . each might have come straight from the agitprop department of the late GLC . . . the vision of England they provide has nothing to offer the overwhelming majority of the potential audience. They represent at best a tiny part of modern England and, more likely, a nasty part of their producers' brains." — Professor Norman Stone, *Sunday Times*, 10 January 1988.

In the interests of comparative literary criticism, we reproduce below an unjustly long neglected essay by Sir Malvolio Normanstone, a distinguished late Elizabethan scholar, wit and man of letters.

THE SCRIBBLERS of our time are fee'd by lords and patron'd by the court. They are written up in the public prints and have a mighty opinion of themselves which — commanding as well as polluting the fountains of public thought, as they do — they send around town on chargers of their own devising, if not of their own paying. They are a carbuncle on the nation's rump and a canker on its soul; so liberally are they kept by the more easily flattered and idle of our great ones that they have become like spaniels are to young and giddy mistresses — they snap at them for their sport.

This was not always so. There was a time when public plays gave both the better sort, and the general, pause for reflection that life was short and respect was owed to God and those He had set above the greater part of mankind: plays of the old morality sort which were often ill-performed, to be sure, and lacked the sophistry of our present diversions — but which were true to the heart of England and of its religion. There were Good and Evil; angels and devils; the sins — lust, envy, greed, and so forth; all was plain and nothing fancy. Yet simple men and women would walk six leagues to see them.

I cannot forbear, in this vein, to set forth (though the more *democratic* of our scribblers, and their claque, will put up a great wailing at this) that their scribbling has fallen off as their lineage has. It has not many years hence that we had as poets men of quality and birth — the good Earl of Surrey and Sir Thomas Wyatt, both beheaded to be sure, but that was no more than a proof of their breeding and nobility. Sir Philip Sidney, who came a little after, was a poet and scholar, a traveller and a *soldier* — that last profession enough to make our wits of today spit and flare their nostrils like whinnying asses — and he loved his Queen, from whom all England's new-found greatness flows. Edmund Spenser, too, who gave such service in ruling the Irish, whose *Faerie Queen* is one of the best things of the age, died a poor man with never a complaint or vicious word passing his lips.

That is very well. But what a change is here! You will not see the scribblers of *our* days die poor men (if men indeed they are: for there is such stuff as sonnets to dark ladies who might be ladies and yet might not; and such dressing up of men for women, and boys for maids, and such scenes of sodomy in plays of Edward II by so many of their hands, that a plain critic does not know what to think, nor wish to think too deeply on't, but these are deep waters and will again swirl the swamps of *democrats* into yowling and snapping and I know not what). But they were not born to rich men's estate: and it is my contention that they should not come to it, either, by virtue of their pens for that their pens have no virtue.

I consider three of them here: Kit *Marlowe*; Ben *Jonson*; and Will *Shakespeare*. The first was the son of a *shoemaker*; the second of a ranting Protestant *preacher*; and the third, the most obscure if the most ardent at the scribbling trade, God knows from what begetting.

In the search for truth on this matter, I have submitted myself to some of their plays, or masques, or public *lamentations*, or I know not what they may be called, for sure they are not *Art*.

> ***". . . for they will spend their hours, when not scribbling with their piss-dipp'd quills, in the Sign of the Snail, or* Escargot, *and the* Groucho, *railing against our Queen, our soldiers, our Lords, and think themselves fine fellows"***

Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* is a huge tedious thing, in as barbarous a setting as its author's inclinations. When the bloated hero of the masquerade has one of his *pandars* say of him

> A god is not so glorious as a king
> I think the pleasure they enjoy in heaven
> Cannot compare with kingly joys on earth

we are in the land of blasphemy and treachery. In his *Faustus* we have a Germanic scholar make a pact with the devil and spend much of this masquerade lusting after an Helen of Troy reincarnate, played (and ill-played) by a mincing boy; and his *Jew of Malta* shows a member of that God-forsaken race creep about Christian dwellings with malice in his heart. This *Kit* caps his triumphant processional with a lingering lecherous masque of Edward II, much of the time spent in bawdy pursuit of a female male named Gaveston, at the end of which the king is pressed to death by a table.

Jonson improves on this stuff not a whit. *His* finest creature is one *Volpone*, otherwise the Fox, a cozening crooked whining rogue who shows an example of great goodness to our abused youth when he opens the matter with a speech: "Good morning to the day, and next my gold, Open the shrine that I may see my saint;" a speech which marks the high, not the low, part of the thing, for it ends with the man condemned to be crippled in irons: a thing which shows how our *poets* do affect to scorn money, its making and its keeping.

SHAKESPEARE merits mention only for the voluminousness of his production, which has something of the *feverish* about it. Some of it is well enough in a low sort: some of the comical and pastoral, or pastoral comical, things are diversions for an hour of a fine evening. But those who cry him up, and he of his own account I have no doubt, would burnish his sun on the tragical and historical things, which are filthy canting weaseling nothings. An old king divides his kingdom between two manifestly wicked daughters, ignores the manifestly good, is blinded and perceives the third maid's goodness just at her passing. Another king is poisoned by his brother who thenceforth marries his wife the Queen while the Prince now will, now will not, murder the murderer — and in sum murders everyone present on stage. Yet another king, Scotch forsooth, is murdered by a trusted retainer who finds he must murder more to guard his throne until — hounded by an unnatural wife — he is murdered also. Yet more unnaturally, a blackamoor nobleman marries a white maid, is seen to descend to a lunatic fit (as we might well expect!) and murders her, then to turn the blade upon his own sooty breast.

What? A night with Master Will is to be sent reeling from the Globe — a pit of a place kept up by lordlings whose gold vastly outweighs their wits — with the stink of blood in the nostrils and the apron piled with corpses. As to plot, you will neither know nor care.

And — here is the nub — all of this in a land where the Queen Empress has established a kind of new paradise: where she has seen off the might of Spain (much to these *masters'* despairs, you may well think, for they are of the Spanish party as is widely known, and they or their sort have made such a wailing when one among the Queen's favoured poets has penned a fine diversion named "SankYe!"); where she has raised up the common people which these masters like not, except they act as a claque to their masques; where the plague has not come above twice and the star of England stands high with us and with the foreigners too.

But they will not cry "Godspeed" to *this*, not they: for they will spend their hours, when not scribbling with their piss-dipp'd quills, in such places as the finer alehouses of our days where French, and I have no doubt on't, Spanish liquors are consumed (as the Sign of the Snail, or *Escargot* as they call it, not to use plain English, and a Spanish place, by name the *Groucho*) in which places they will rail against our Queen, and our soldiers, and our Lords (save those that do keep them in silks) and think themselves fine fellows.

Yet we know they are not: and they shall be seen for what they are; and forgot in a better age . . .

(*Sir Malvolio's MS breaks off here.*) □

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ARTS

THEATRE

Life with Léotard

Victoria Radin

Imagine a Conservative government spending £10 million pounds on a new theatre whose opening production was a long-suppressed celebration of homo-eroticism. Imagine living in France

Ariane Mnouchkine: the Soleil never sets

"OPPORTUNISM," sniffed *Libération*. But the *gens du théâtre* shrugged their shoulders. They had known for some time what was coming in the latest theatrical bulletin from François Léotard, who two years ago was elevated to Minister of Culture (in France, an important post) under the Chirac coalition government.

In fact, while Léotard's programme lacks the bravura shown by his charismatic Socialist predecessor, Jack Lang, it does sustain a commitment to drama that makes Britain seem a nation of apes. A new theatre complex is opening in Orléans, three other centres are to be built in the regions. Less universally pleasing is Léotard's decision to give the Comédie-Française — "the most fundamental of our cultural institutions", in his phrase — an *extra* grant for 1988 of £1½ million. The company founded by Molière is also getting a third theatre, to be used as a school, and will spread full-time into the historic Odéon, which it now shares with the Théâtre de l'Europe.

But Léotard's proclamation takes no account of what he is more quietly helping — or, perhaps, being forced to help — behind the scenes: for example, the proposed Cité des Arts. This creative hothouse, based loosely on the Villa dei Medici, will be housed in the Latin Quarter in the same glorious 13th-century monastery which contains the year-old Université Européenne de recherches, a sort of cosmopolitan All Souls which numbers Umberto Eco and Michel Butor among its literary members. The Cité will offer working and living spaces for visual artists as well as the Espace Théâtral International, which will be headed by Simone Benmussa, an intellectual avant-gardiste whose appointment was secured by a petition signed by Beckett and Ionesco among others. For all Léotard's obvious political ambition, it must be said that in France Conservatism has a very long way to go before it resembles the cultural barbarism of Britain.

Léotard is also enjoying the credit for the stunning new Théâtre de la Colline, which opened to fanfare two weeks ago. Designated one of France's six "national theatres", it was conceived under Lang — the building costs of some £10 million ultimately borne by the current government. Situated in a gentrifying Parisian suburb on the site of the populist Théâtre de l'Est Parisien (which has now moved down the road) it boasts two auditoria and a glass facade which allows passers-by to peer into its handsome and nautically-minded foyers.

Jorge Lavelli is its director; an Argentian who came to Paris as a student and is best known, apart from his opera productions, for his work with hispanic dramatists. He has dedicated the building to plays of this century and his first production was in theory a brilliant choice. Lorca's *El Publico (The Public)*, written in 1930, remained a closet work until its publication ten years ago; it was staged for the first time in Madrid last year. Its daringness was twofold; like E. M. Forster's suppressed *Maurice* (whose film version is *adored* by the French) it talks openly about homosexuality; it is also a surrealist work in the tradition of Lorca's friends Dali and Bunuel. Among its less wholesome images are those of a nude, red-painted Christ on a cross made from an iron bed, and a homicidal, paedophiliac Emperor.

Lorca estimated this play to be an example of "true" theatre over what he denigrated as the "possible" — which included all his other works. *Le Public*'s opening images are wonderful, with a Director whose office is invaded by two groups of spectators: four white horses wielding trumpets as phalluses who clamour for easy theatre, and three bearded men who discuss the Director's production of *Romeo and Juliet* while complaining that his work doesn't go far enough. The scenes that follow can be enjoyed for themselves or taken as the Director's attempts to give the bearded trio what they want: and they include a Juliet who rises from her tomb keen to make love with a horse and later turns into a man who falls for Romeo, and a beautifully lyrical homoerotic interlude between a Pan-figure and an acrobat.

The means were minimal at the studio theatre of the Théâtre du Rond-Point where *Trio en mi Bémol* (Trio in E Flat), written and directed by Eric Rohmer and his first theatre piece, has just ended, madly over-subscribed throughout its run but with

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an underwhelmed quality press. This is the cinema's master of small observations at his most minute: a boring young couple meet — perhaps to display their Kenzo clobber? — in his apartment over a period of time whose metereological changes are artfully framed in a window. The play begins with a concert performance of the titular piece: he is a pedantic Mozartian, she a rock fan who has left him for a raver. She visits and plays the sort of power games which would embarrass a child; and eventually fetches up with a suitcase, manoeuvring herself back into a relationship which will content neither of them. Under its chic patina, the play is desperately bleak, but to the Parisians the high visual gloss of its two young actors, their clothes and decor, sufficed to make it the sort of evening you'd kill to see.

Ariane Mnouchkine and her Théâtre du Soleil is one of the enduring wonders of the Paris scene, an estimation based on her politicism, her magnificent visual flair, her importation — even into Shakespeare — of Eastern theatrical traditions, as well as what must be accounted her not entirely benevolent exploitation of her actors, who all toil for a pittance, working collectively on sewing, cooking, building and so on, with their dressing-rooms set in the auditorium, never offstage for a moment.

Her last work, *The Terrible but Unended Story of Norodom Sihanouk, King of Cambodia,* written by Hélène Cixous was magnificent. *L'Indiade, or the India of their Dreams,* a chronicle of the years 1937-1945 by the same team, has little of the previous work's grace, ghosts, or poetry — though it does have a most life-like bear as the companion to a Gandhi who inadvertently displays a lot of the music hall. The piece lasts the Mnouchkinean five hours: if you do go — and I'd still recommend a visit for those who've never seen the Théâtre du Soleil — beware of the remarkably credible Indian beggar-woman who asks your name as you come in; being called "Victoria!" from the stage and asked to proclaim my belief in humanity in French is *pour mourir*. □

PHOTOGRAPHY

No crystal stair

Val Wilmer

It's taken Roy DeCarava 70 years to cross the Atlantic, but even in the States, where Val Wilmer first saw his work in 1962, this Black photographer has had to keep struggling from obscurity

THE CHINESE HAVE a definition of poetry: the sense stays with you even after the sound has gone.

It can be like that with photography, sometimes: the image reaches into the common sensibility, awakes memories and feelings, stays imprinted on the mind's eye. It's rare when it happens, for there is much in art that is self-serving, but poets of the camera do exist, people so touched by the lessons of life that they need to share their discovery with others.

Few photographers are more deserving of the "poet" tag than Roy DeCarava, whose first British exhibition opens at the Photographers Gallery* next Thursday, 28 January. Born in Brooklyn in 1919, he has been finding an uncommon beauty in everyday people since he exchanged paintbrush for camera some four decades ago. With remarkable sensitivity, he has gone beyond the surface of their workaday world to show us the lives of working people — most, though not exclusively, people of colour. The scrubwoman, the janitor, the musician and garment district workhorse are his subjects, at work and at play, celebrating love for each other, celebrating survival.

A Roy DeCarava study of musicians getting on with their lives

Careworn faces watch over carefree youngsters and we know that, for them, as poet Langston Hughes once wrote, "Life ain't been no crystal stair". But when DeCarava pictures a Harlem family partying in their kitchen, Saturday night, you can hear the laughter ring from each frame. His subjects are the singers of *The Sorrow Songs* of W.E.B. DuBois, the story-tellers of Langston Hughes' *Not Without Laughter*. Survivors, sooth-sayers, celebrators. You know the tiredness of a man climbing the subway steps at days-end, sense how *her* feet feel when she nods off on the train homeward-bound. DeCarava, the poet, tells it all.

DeCarava is also a consummate technician whose background in painting is evident from his style. To draw the viewer inside the frame, he has concentrated on the darker end of the tonal scale, producing prints that have been the despair of all but the most committed of printers, believing that "the only thing that's black in a photograph is a black subject". Under his tutelage, even the darkest of greys shine with hidden detail. His concern is to produce a photograph that creates the *feeling* of a subject rather than something clearly identifiable.

Not surprisingly as he is an amateur musician, the jazz clubs of New York have provided a dimly-lit mileu in which to put his tonal theories into practice. When he photographs musicians, though, they are presented as part of the seamless continuum that characterises Afro-American music. They are working people, not icons: Billie Holiday at a party, the Ellington band in rehearsal. Coltrane and Elvin sweat on the bandstand, but we see them pensive and thoughtful, too, preparing for work, wondering about anything other than what they'll be playing that night.

DeCarava's music photographs were assembled for a major exhibition at the Studio Museum in Harlem five years ago, subsequently toured by USIS. It has been more than 30 years, however, since he first came to public attention. Edward Steichen, who sponsored him for a Guggenheim Fellowship — he was the first Black artist recipient, one of the few photographers — included his work in the epochal *Family of Man* in 1955. The same year saw the publication of *The Sweet Flypaper of Life*, Harlem through the eyes of an optimistic grandmother, with a storyline by the irrepressible Langston Hughes.

Before *Flypaper* it would be true to say that in photography as elsewhere Black people were afflicted with the outsider's view. An unwritten assumption existed that there was nothing wrong with whites being the exclusive interpreters and curators of "the Black experience", leaving Blacks to take care of street-corner photography — "vernacular practitioners" as someone unkindly termed them. The book marked the trajectory of the postwar awakening, becoming part of the process of change and influencing countless other photographers. "Authenticity" stamped every frame. With every image came the knowledge that the artist himself had lived the life, lending added value to each picture. You didn't need to know whether he had hung out in that particular basement, sat with that baby asleep on his knee, it was enough that he knew a hundred people who did.

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But although *Flypaper* was praised for the authenticity of its vision, DeCarava himself faced discrimination on a dual level. Not only were there traditions of representation to be challenged, as late as the 1960s there were few role-models available for the working Black photographer. Historically, America has seldom allowed more than a handful of Black artists into the mainstream and so at the peak of the Black Arts movement of the period he felt it incumbent on him to help set up the influential Kamoinge Workshop in Harlem. His integrity and generosity of vision earned him the title of "father figure" to the new generation of photographers who emerged from those revolutionary times.

In recent years, DeCarava has shaken off some of the obscurity that has kept him working in day-jobs and academia while *Flypaper* earned collector's item status. But it has been far from easy. What a pity, then, that in an ill-conceived attempt at righting the balance the Photographers Gallery has perpetuated the ghettoising of the Black artist by linking his show with work by D-Max, a group of young Afro-British photographers, rather than presenting him on his own terms. *Plus ça change* . . . or, as they'd say in America, same old shit. □

**Photographers Gallery, Great Newport Street, London WC2. On 27 Jan., at 7.30, DeCarava gives a talk at the Gallery; on 29 Jan. he is in conversation with Stuart Hall at London New Technology Network, 86-100 St Pancras Way, London NW1, at 7 p.m.*

CINEMA

Lean cuts

Judith Williamson

The Big Heat (15)
In a Lonely Place (PG)
Everyman, London; soon nationwide

DESPITE WHAT FEELS like an onslaught of new releases I am taking time out to celebrate the re-release of two Hollywood classics: Fritz Lang's *The Big Heat* (1953) and Nicholas Ray's *In a Lonely Place* (1950). In collaboration with Columbia, the BFI have produced new 35mm prints, which will soon be playing throughout the country.

New black-and-white prints are particularly welcome at a time when the ridiculous trend of "colourisation" grows apace in the USA. But besides enjoying the quality of the image, there are other reasons why this is an interesting moment to see the films again. In the middle of all the fuss about *Fatal Attraction* and *Sammy and Rosie*, here are two movies — one about sexual mistrust, one about social corruption — made on the brink of another era of return to family values, after the upheaval immediately following the war.

Much has been written about the figure of Woman in *film noir*. Both *The Big Heat* and *In a Lonely Place* can be placed in this category, and both star Gloria Grahame as a single woman who is sexually active. While the films differ in many ways, in both she gets good lines and a strong visual presence, giving her a kind of filmic dignity which contrasts with what one might call the "sillification" of independent women in recent movies.

But it is impossible to talk about the films' sexual meanings without also looking at their construction. Unlike many films today they have an economy and lack of naturalism which add to, rather than detract from, their emotional intensity. (Economy is a greatly underrated quality in contemporary filmmaking: how many times do you *need* to cut between a rabbit hutch and a saucepan?)

The Big Heat opens with a shot which at once provides a logo for the whole movie and launches its action — the image of a gun about to be used by a cop to commit suicide. Skilfully jumping locations through a series of phone calls, Lang introduces in a single sequence the network of key figures whose chain of corruption Glenn Ford, as Detective Bannion, unravels during the film. Grahame is the gangster's moll, while Ford figures as husband and father in an excessively idyllic family whose domestic scenes are, as in *Fatal Attraction*, disrupted first by the phone and then by physical violence. However, it is not an Other woman who is the source of evil here but the mob, or, more precisely, the fear and cowardice that allow it to operate.

While on one level Lang sets up an opposition between the world of the Good Marriage — which takes place in interiors so brightly lit as to appear almost heavenly — and the underworld of streets and hotel rooms, on another he brings them together. At a pivotal moment, roughly half-way through, the film cuts from Ford's look around the now empty family house to Grahame behind a bar; and from this moment she starts to redeem herself by helping him crack the crime ring, so that by the time she dies she can be linked with his wife: "You two would have got along fine," are his last words to her.

Conversely, marriage is no guarantee of goodness. The cop whose suicide opens the film has a "respectable" wife living off the mob: Grahame tells her, "We're sisters under the mink." And this, broadly speaking, is one of the film's key themes: the spectrum of good and bad along which people can easily slide in different situations. Its most topical relevance is perhaps, sadly, its theme of fear: "I do what I'm told," says one of the cops minding the gangster, and as Ford says bitterly, "That's what we're all supposed to do, aren't we."

What is disturbing about the women in *The Big Heat* is not how they're characterised — all are strong figures — but what the plot itself does to them. The only one to come out alive is an already crippled old lady — and the film is famous for the scene where Lee Marvin throws coffee across Grahame's face. Schematically, this gives her a good side and a bad side — half beautiful, half scarred — an image which perfectly encapsulates the meanings she carries within the plot as the good Bad Girl.

Grahame herself seemed to carry this persona from film to film. In 1955 she appeared in *Oklahoma!* as a bad Good Girl with the number "I'm just a girl who can't say no". Often remembered as a frilly romp in the corn, this film in fact incorporates a violent and threatening sexuality in the form of its porn-loving farmhand Judd (Rod Steiger).

Fear and suspicion in sexual relations is also the theme of much of Ray's work and **In a Lonely Place** — set, interestingly, in Hollywood — is no exception. Grahame plays a girl who *chooses* to say yes, and this is the film where her stature is perhaps greatest: Bogart plays a prototype *homme fatal* and much of the plot is experienced from the female point of view. With a structure whose almost architectural organisation is akin to Lang's, Ray switches our identification half way through, from sharing Bogart's experience of being accused of murder, to sharing Grahame's suspicion that he really has committed it. The fact that we end up at some distance from the character with whom we are at first led to identify illustrates that the lonely place is the self — the distance

Grahame and Bogart in *A Lonely Place* (i.e. one where smoking is permitted?)

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between the lovers taking the graphic form of the kind of no-person's-land between their neighbouring apartments.

The analogy with architecture isn't random: Ray studied with Frank Lloyd Wright before turning to films. Both he and Lang use cinematic space not as something to be filled with props but as a precise means for placing characters in terms of their relative power and significance. Their 90-minute screen time is tightly structured and never wasted. Much contemporary movie-making seems full of clutter, both in shots and *of* shots; these two films offer the chance to see Hollywood at its leanest, and richest. □

TELEVISION

Render unto Dave

Hugo Williams

NOTHING IN THE *TV Times* description of "a documentary film about animal cemeteries in America" gave away the game that **Gates of Heaven** (C4) was an extended meditation on the madness of normality once it is allowed to express itself fully.

I was giving the buttons a final rake before retiring when on came this lingering shot of Little Toby, a four-legged friend who could take part in conversations. Little Toby, we heard, was put on earth for two reasons: 1) to love 2) to be loved. "We used to comb his hair down over his eyes," said his bereaved parent. "Now it is time to give him back to Mother Nature."

This tribute was followed immediately by a chat with Dave from the "rendering" firm (glue factory) who described with a chuckle how some people had to vomit when they heard he was in the "tallow business". "When I go out to dinner, I'm asked not to say what I do. We had an elephant and I got all these furious calls. Now I have an understanding with the zoo; they don't tell anyone that the animals have gone to be rendered. They say they have gone to an old donkeys' home." (Chuckles).

The first half of the film concerned a one-man campaign to prevent a pet cemetery being cleared for housing because it was "inhuman". "My only crime is compassion," thundered the frightening old redneck, who appeared alternately in and out of doors. It was his duty, he said, to found a permanent Eden for the pets, with a chapel, stained glass, a priest, a hamburger stall and a concession outlet. "It's not a suede shoe game, the pet cemetery concept."

In the second half of the film a new pet cemetery was inaugurated and the American flag run up. A flower-laden golf-buggy was seen transporting Little Caesar to plot 9W in the Garden of Companionship. A photo of the animal was bonded to the gravestone. "Look at that smile! I feel I know him already." On the headstone, a last thought: "God is Love. Backwards It's Dog."

The all-male family who semi-administer the spread are like Andy Warhol's *Lonesome Cowboys*. Not unexpectedly, they turn out to be personal fulfillment missionaries of various types, obsessed with "trophies". "I like to present myself to prospective clients with as many trophies on view as possible," said a brother. "There is a tendency to take comfort from small achievement, but this is only a trap." Another family member has to collect the corpses in his van. "I have to memorise, literally, the streets and locales of the veterinary clinics. Naturally, there's an element of fear involved." In his time he has had to lay out gerbils and snakes — coiled, of course, not straight. His younger brother, a heavy metal composer, has to dig the graves. "Not too large or you get overlap, too small and it can be embarrassing." When there's no one around he moves his amps outdoors and howls at the Garden of Devotion. Their father is an animal patriot: "The Garden of Honour is where we will bury, free of charge, any animal that dies in the line of duty." The film closed on memorials of plastic tortoises and ducks and I went to bed with my lack of faith in human nature fully restored.

Can it be that the *Dandy* and *Beano* have improved since I took them to please my parents in the 1950s? Of course, I didn't realise that the characters inhabited "a subtly different moral universe" from mine (A. N. Wilson). We had something called "The A2 Box" at my school, where each class took it in turns to have their heads pushed into a trunk full of old comics. You were supposed to grab what you could and run back to your classrooom with it. One year I lost a tooth. Later I took up poetry.

A. N. Wilson, a near comic-cut himself, was appearing on *The Dandy-Beano Story* on **Arena** (BBC2): "They're still probably the best weeklies appearing in this country," he said, "if you compare *Punch,* the *New Statesman* and [an afterthought] the *Spectator.*" I began to see what he meant when we examined an instalment of Dennis the Menace. Walter the Softy was seen "practising his simper" at a "softy meeting" which I seemed to recognise. He had won a prize for his poem "The Little Birdies". In the background, Dennis the Menace accompanied the ceremony with his "Menacing Ensemble" and planned a spot of "softy bashing". With Wilson's "subtly different moral universe" in mind, I took comfort from the fact that "whether you're human or animal you get a feed at the end — the bangers and mash are always arranged in a particular way — not Freudian exactly, it's just the way they are." It was true; all the same, I had seldom heard the *status quo* sound quite so unappetising.

Perhaps this was due to an alarming report the day before on **This Week** (ITV) about the increase in "queer bashing" in certain parts of south London. These were "no longer just the casual attacks, but organised gangs of thugs, with chains, coshes and baseball bats". (Gay Switchboard.) Another organisation, Lager (Lesbian and Gay Employment Rights), is worried about Clause 28, which is "loosely enough drawn to allow prejudice greater scope". (E.g.: Aids victims being burnt out of their homes and Lesbians losing custody of their children.) Were they breaking the law and "promoting homosexuality" by offering advice to such people? David Wilshire MP thought so, at length. And naturally James Anderton thought so: "Homosexuals should be challenged as to *why* they engage in sodomy and other practices." According to Lager it was not a problem that was going to go away: "If nothing is done, there are going to be murders on the streets." □

MUSIC

House is not a home

Simon Reynolds

HURTLING THROUGH the uppermost reaches of the charts is a record called "House Arrest (The Beat Is Law)" by **Krush**. Like the M.A.R.R.S. smash "Pump Up The Volume", it was initially circulated in the clubs as a white label, and hipsters were flabbergasted when it was revealed that this wasn't an obscure American import but hailed from these shores. Like M.A.R.R.S., it combines the hyperactive insistence of House rhythms with hip hop's sampling and scratching. Like M.A.R.R.S., it was propelled into the chart by the bloc vote of club and pirate radio play, and was only picked up on by the national stations after it was a hit. And both "Pump Up The Volume" and "House Arrest" have been hailed by some factions within the music media as the vanguard of an imminent "onslaught" of British House music.

"Upsurges" of "homegrown" versions of Black American musics are vaunted with tiresome regularity in the music press. We've had Brit-funk, British jazz, British hip hop . . . Why? Why this strange residual patriotism in an age where the pop networks of distribution and reciprocal influence have made national boundaries so porous?

A noise band in Manchester can have more in common with a peer group in Austin, Texas than with one of its "neighbours" two blocks away; House music originates in Chicago, but British Northern Soul fans have responded to it more fervently than most of the rest of the USA. The very fact that House is massive over here proves how irrelevant questions of nationality and location are in pop, yet still the media try to rally an obsolete patriotic allegiance to "our" bands, a kind of positive discrimination.

Partly these reflexes derive from punk, which inculcated an emotional commitment to the idea of things "breaking out all over", "our manor", "the kids on the street": the continued recourse to the language of "upsurges", "waves", "onslaughts" allows nostalgic writers to cast whatever's happening in the same vaguely combative, oppositional light as punk. (British House has been compared with the punk DIY boom — it's cheap and easy to make a House track.) Another factor is the unease felt by London's anti-rockist consensus over Britain's tributary relationship to American pop culture; it rubs up against the "soulcialist" anti-Americanism. The hope is for some kind of musical autarky, or the grafting of a distinctive "Britishness" into imported genres. Finally, there's simple laziness. Fuss over the fact that it's HAPPENING OVER HERE, or its Newness, allows writers to shirk the more testing task of analysing exactly *what* is happening.

A really close listen to House indicates how singularly unsuited it is to be the subject of punk-style clarion calls. It's difficult to imagine a genre more place-less or hostile to an infusion of ethnicity. Although it comes from *a* place (Chicago) it is not the collective voice of a community (it's a pure pleasure product produced in cottage-factory conditions), nor does it draw

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anything from its environment. House departs entirely from the old organic language of music — roots, cross-pollination, hybridisation. House is disco ultimate, assembled not born at the convergence point between a fascination with Europe (Moroder, Hi-NRG, early '80s electro-pop producers like Trevor Horn and Martin Rushent, Kraftwerk) and a harking back to disco's golden eras (Philly, early '80s New York records by Peech Boys and D-Train, electro).

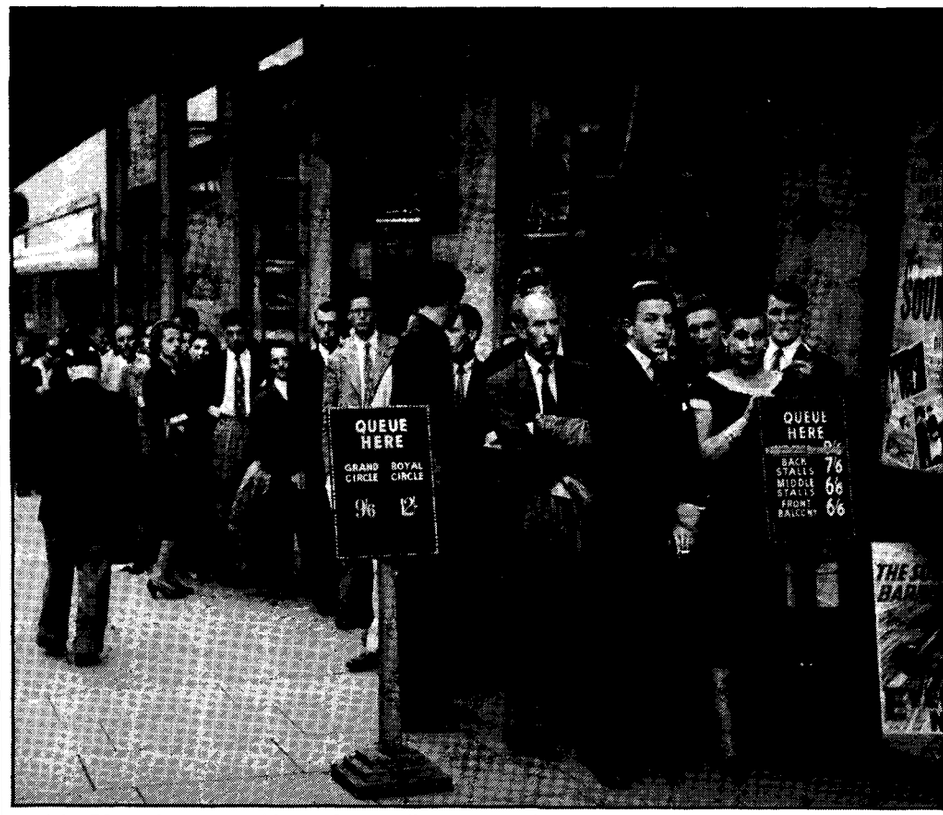
The special effects once added to dance records to spice them up have become the whole body of House. Split-level drum programmes, sequencer motifs, minimal, costive basslines: the trad idea of the band grooving off one another, of flesh hitting wood and metal, has been superceded by machines talking among themselves, with the producer as chairman. The singer in House is even more of a puppet than in oldstyle disco: the voice is vivisected by editing and vocoderisation. House is not susceptible to a hijacking of its form by "content", radical or authentic. The lyrics (often no more than the title) consist of buzzwords. The Song (soul's narrative and resolution) is replaced by the Track (an infinite seduction, in which various sonic resources are rearranged endlessly and satisfaction is forestalled indefinitely). Quality of product depends not on creativity but expertise, an inventiveness within the almost geometrical rules of the genre. The signature is superceded by the trademark.

In other words, the punters don't care who or where so long as the record's dance-effective. Krush have done so well because they've combined the brisk insistence of House beats with a blandly catchy, more conventional hook. As an egghead, I'm much more interested by the genre's extremities, like Brutal House and Acid House. Last year, for instance, **Nitro Deluxe** released two astounding tracks: "This Brutal House" (Cooltempo), with its galactic vistas and bass like shifting continental plates, and "On A Mission", where a single phrase of female vocal is multi-tracked, edited and varispeeded into a psychedelic babble of sub-phoneme particles.

And now *The House Sound of Chicago: Vol. III— Acid Tracks* (London) gathers together specimens of the latest wave in House. As the taking of LSD and Ecstasy has spread amongst clubbers, beats have slowed down, special effects have become wiggier. The result — mechanical mantras as soundtrack to cybernetic bacchanalia, a neo-pagan insurrection against the head's hegemony over the body. The most remarkable tracks here are **Jamie Principle**'s "Baby Wants To Ride", recalling both Euro-futurists like Cabaret Voltaire, and Prince (the freaked-out psychedelic sextopia and robotic lubriciousness of the early "Dirty Mind" and the recent "Hot Thing"). And "Acid Over" by **Tyree** — an INSANE, spartan electro-pulse repeated with slight inflections and warps.

Generally, it's these anonymous, *illegible* records from overseas that are most disturbing. Not because there's subversion at large (subversion is always textual, directed at an ill-defined straight world out there, while *we* are in the know, still in command, on the inside). Instead there's a textual topsy-turviness, a loss of pop's stable rules of *proportion* and *continuity*, a disorientation and destabilisation into which *we* are (willingly) inducted. □

Books



Bert Hardy/Radio Times Hulton Picture Library

Back in '53 — when you could get a front stall seat, a choc ice, 20 Woodbines and a slap-up meal with all the trimmings afterwards and still have change from ten bob — people even queued for *David Lean* films

CINEMA

Screening the audience

Paul Kerr

Mass-Observation at the Movies
ed. JEFFREY RICHARDS and DOROTHY SHERIDAN
Routledge £35.95
The British Labour Movement and Film, 1918-1939
STEPHEN G. JONES *Routledge* £25.95
The Last Picture Show? Britain's Changing Film Audiences
DAVID DOCHERTY, DAVID MORRISON and MICHAEL TRACEY *BFI* £4.95

NOT SO LONG AGO Film Studies was about films — neither producers nor consumers got a look in. Then critics decided that to establish cinema as an art form it was necessary to establish film directors as artists. Gradually the production contexts in which these artists worked also began to be uncovered, so that we now have histories of studios like Gainsborough and Ealing alongside studies of directors like Hitchcock and Powell.

Only very recently, however, has attention begun to turn from producers to consumers, to the audience itself. Indeed, in the 1970s the filmgoer was simply (or, rather, very complexly) an entirely abstract entity — a sort of man-in-the-Clapham-Odeon phenomenon. Concepts from psycho-analysis were redeployed to theorise the film viewer as "voyeur" — a borrowing which paid off well in thinking through the representation of women in films as objects of the male "look", but rarely measured up such speculative spectators with real audiences.

In late '80s Britain, the consumer may be king — both the production and consumption of audio-visual fictions are presently being privatised — but it is sociologists and historians rather than film theorists who are now dominating film studies. These three books, for instance, focus respectively on three consecutive periods in British film history — the interwar years, World War Two, and the four decades since 1946.

In the late '40s more than three-quarters of the British population went to the cinema at least once a year, often two or three times a week. In the late '80s three-quarters of the population don't go at all. Seventy million cinema tickets were sold in Britain in 1986 compared with 1,640 million in 1946. But it is worth noting that in 1986 350 million films were rented on video. Since an average of three people watch every tape, that adds up to 1,050 million video viewings of features.

Perhaps the audience for films (as opposed to attendance at cinemas) hasn't declined as much as we might think. But cinema and video viewing couldn't be less alike as aesthetic experiences and

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the demographics of the two media are equally distinct. Comparison of the audience breakdowns provided here reveals how over the decades the cinema audience has got younger, moved south, became increasingly masculine and middle-class. It is social change and not film criticism which has made cinema an art form at last.

Together these three volumes offer an extraordinary account of 70 years of British film viewing, though each has its own particular approach. **Mass-Observation at the Movies**, for instance, is essentially an anthropological enterprise — bringing together the findings of its volunteer observers on what filmgoers thought about the films they saw and the cinemas they saw them in — and, for all the clumsiness of its questionnaires, its blow-up of filmgoing in wartime Bolton is irreplaceable. Nevertheless, there is a real sense here that the quaint customs of Bolton cinemagoers — indeed of cinema itself — were little more than tribal rituals to MO's amateur anthropologists. As one mass observer wrote to a volunteer, "What interests us is (a) the exact as possible story of the film plus such trivia as director, company, cast, etc. and (b) audience reaction to the film." Notebook jottings in the stalls combined on-screen credits with overheard conversations. The films themselves were assumed to be valueless.

Stephen Jones' excellent study of **The British Labour Movement and Film** has a great deal to say about the implications of that "etc", with all its class-based associations. He explores the struggles of trade unionists in the film industry — and I suppose his book is best described as labour history, though it is much more than that. It is also a socio-economic study of working-class cinema between the wars with some utterly intriguing detours into party political perspectives on propaganda, the screening policies of miners' film clubs and the prewar north/south divide. Jones is as familiar with the bare-bone statistics of cinemagoing as anyone but the historical and political flesh he provides brings it to life no less vividly than the contemporary accounts of and by the ordinary people recorded by Mass Observation — a considerable achievement.

Like the Mass Observers, the authors of **The Last Picture Show?** rely on opinion polls, albeit with rather more rigorous samples. Put together by the Broadcasting Research Unit (a title prefigured in MO's Cinema Research Unit of 1937) this study of cinemagoing and (note the distinction) film viewing has the strengths and weaknesses characteristic of the sociological approach to culture, but it is important in two respects. It rejects the clichéd charge that television was responsible for the decline of cinemagoing and suggests instead that "the real culprits were Elvis Presley, expresso coffee, the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947 and the sclerosis of the British exhibition industry". And it refuses to prioritise cinema above television or video among the ways of watching films available to today's consumers.

Ironically, the major flaw in BRU's book is its reluctance to consider the meanings of films for audiences. Having warned against seeing popular film genres as some sort of cinematic mirror of actual social fears, for instance, the authors go on to talk about the values which films espouse without pausing to ponder how they can possibly know what those values are without some kind of critical theory of how films create and communicate meaning.

Indeed, BRU's approach to meaning is no more sophisticated than Mass-Observation's 40 years earlier, as generalisations like "people want films to confirm safe consensual values" reveal only too clearly.

Information about the actual as opposed to conceptual film viewer was long overdue in cinema studies (we still await a history of film exhibition) but BRU is wrong to throw out the baby of theoretical rigour about the films themselves with the bath water of theoretical hypotheses about the audience. □

PAINTING

Wall to wall

John Spurling

Diego Rivera
ed. CYNTHIA NEWMAN HELMS *South Bank Centre/Norton* £15 at the Hayward Gallery, £22.50 elsewhere
The Murals of Diego Rivera
DESMOND ROCHFORT *South Bank Centre/Journeyman* £5.95 at the Hayward Gallery, £12.95 elsewhere

EMERGENT NATIONS have usually been given their first sense of identity by writers. Shakespeare did it for us, Pushkin for Russia, Manzoni for Italy, Wagner (as poetic dramatist) for Germany, Achebe for Nigeria, García Marquez for Colombia.

Rivera's "Manning the Barricade" (honestly), 1928

Mexico is perhaps unique in having found its identity through a painter. Diego Rivera was not, of course, the only muralist to spring up in the wake of Mexico's Revolution, but as one of his two greatest rivals, David Alfaro Siqueiros, generously admitted: "During its first years our movement was publicly identified only with Diego Rivera. Mexican painting was Diego Rivera and nothing else." He added that "it is impossible to understand the full magnitude of Rivera's work unless we understand that mural painting is fundamental to it, and that his easel painting is only complementary".

Unfortunately, the large touring exhibition which has just closed in London could only be complementary: it showed — in dream-like landscapes, in clever borrowings from Spanish, Dutch and French masters, in Rivera's brief period as a bright, decorative Cubist, and in portrait and nude drawings — how very gifted he was from the beginning.

It also reminded us that, in the still unsettled history of 20th-century art, Rivera (as well as Siqueiros and Orozco) may have more importance than has so far been allowed. But, if one wants to understand why, the exhibition was of little help — indeed more of a distraction — and it was sensible of the South Bank Board to accompany it not only with the large book/catalogue published by the original organisers of the show, but also an extra book by Desmond Rochfort, himself a muralist, specifically discussing and illustrating the murals.

In the course of 30 years Rivera painted 23 murals in Mexico and the USA and covered, according to my own rapid calculations from the dimensions given in the useful "Mural Census" in the catalogue, no less than 2,368 square metres with frescoes. Much more, in fact, since when it came to his largest and earliest work in fresco — the walls round two courtyards on three floors in the Mexican Ministry of Education — I gave up counting. The catalogue says that the painted areas of this building "cover linear wall distances approximating one-half the length and width of a city block in the central zone of Mexico City . . . on each of three levels".

This huge commission was originally supposed to be shared out between several painters, but Rivera contrived first to edge himself into overall command of the programme and eventually to exclude the others from all but four of the 116 main panels.

No wonder that, having once accepted his resignation, then (after readmission) expelled him, the Mexican Communist Party was reluctant to admit him for the third time. No wonder that he was asked to leave the Soviet Union after a nine-month stay in 1927-8. No wonder that he quarrelled with Trotsky (who had stayed in Rivera's house when he first took refuge in Mexico) as well as Nelson Rockefeller (over the unscheduled inclusion of Lenin's portrait in a mural for the Rockefeller Centre in New York).

Rivera's private life with three wives and at least two other women who bore him children is only hinted at in these books, but was presumably as noisy and bumpy as his public one. It was no doubt lucky for everyone, especially the Mexican people, that he did keep fairly busy painting walls: his only

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public appointment was as director of the Academy of San Carlos, when he immediately proposed that the students should spend eight years working in factories by day and studying art at night before embarking on a full-time, night-and-day, five-year art course. Neither of these books reveals the outcome of this proto-Maoist scheme.

It's clear that we're dealing with a man of superhuman energy and application, even if his work were of merely average standard. But, as Siqueiros suggests and as the writers and illustrations in these books demonstrate almost conclusively, it was in no way average. The fertility of Rivera's ideas, the scope of the material he included (Aztec mythology, the Spanish Conquest, the Mexican Revolution and the transformation of the modern world by technology) and the extraordinary amalgam of Renaissance, pre-Hispanic Indian, Mexican folk and modern realist styles in which he handled it, match the vastness of the spaces he covered. The most interesting essay in the catalogue is Francis V. O'Connor's on the symbolism inherent in Rivera's orientation of his murals according to the points of the compass: he was not only a genuinely popular and, in the broadest sense, consciously political artist, but also a true interpreter of myths and archetypes.

Both books are written quite drily and academically, presenting and analysing their subject rather than making extravagant claims for him. Desmond Rochfort ends by claiming that Rivera "created the first great example of post-colonial art. In the realm of art he created the plastic equivalent of the independence and identity sought in the realm of politics". Surely one can go further. There has been no history painter of Rivera's quality anywhere this century, none indeed since Goya and he on a much smaller scale. □

PSYCHOTHERAPY

The restless wave

Marie Maguire

Our Need for Others and its Roots in Infancy
JOSEPHINE KLEIN *Tavistock* £29.95 & £14.95

"TANTRUMS POUND through muscle and vein and cause the child to fear total annihilation." (Frances Tustin).

Josephine Klein attempts in her book a detailed, concrete account of what life might feel like for the very young infant, who is totally dependent on its relationships with others, and the implications of this early experience for later personality development. "What," she goes on to ask, "does this tell us about the help which psychotherapists and psychoanalysts can give if, in later years, we find we are compulsively recreating the relationships which were first developed between the baby-self and the parent-adult?" She is primarily addressing "intelligent lay-people" but, as a psychotherapist, she hopes to interest her colleagues in the way she has arrived at her conclusions.

What is fascinating and original in this account is the way in which Klein assembles material from different fields to construct her collage. Neuro-physiological theories which bear on early psychological development are juxtaposed with the work of influential British psychoanalytic theorists, including Winnicott and Fairbairn, and their American counterparts, Kohut and Kernberg, emphasising the ways in which they stress the importance of infantile relationships rather than of biological drives or forces. And the theory is enlivened by some vivid case-material, such as the treatment by the French analyst Mme Sechehaye of an anorexic girl, Renée, in the 1930s.

Klein suggests that the baby who has no sense of itself as distinct from its mother experiences itself as a "flux", as "no more organised or differentiated from its environment than water streaming out of a tap or hose". Using the ideas of Frances Tustin, who worked with autistic children, she describes how the infant's "felt-self" may be experienced in terms of fluids and gases. Having just made the major adjustment from the fluid medium of the womb to becoming a "dweller on dry land", "it is to be expected that sensations associated with floating in a fluid medium will linger on to become part of the early body image". Klein goes on to outline Esther Bick's theories, derived from infant observation, about the role of the mother at this stage. Ideally, she acts as a kind of emotional "skin" or container, before the infant has developed its own ability to contain its fluctuating rushes of sensation. When a child doesn't have the use of a protective mother-skin, practically everything feels like an impingement from outside.

In the first of her stated aims, to render complex theoretical concepts into clear and simple language, Klein succeeds admirably. She illustrates the ideas in her book with a continuous flow of homely examples, which, unusually for a writer in this field, indicate a strong sensitivity to the differences that gender, class and culture make to individual experience. So I turned eagerly to the final, short section which explores the implications of these theories for the practice of psychotherapy.

Here Klein explains that people with "structural weaknesses" in their personalities, resulting from inadequacies in their early relationships, will experience themselves as "fragmented, liable to fall apart, not really alive". They cannot be healed by insight alone but need a considerable period of secure attachment to the therapist, need to be "held" before they can be healed. Indeed few psychotherapists would nowadays deny the importance of building up an emotionally "holding" relationship where the client/patient feels that she or he can trust and be understood; there would, however, be strong disagreements about how this should be done, and whether it should precede or accompany interpretations that might lead to an understanding by the client and therapist of the client's internal world. And, at this point, Klein becomes vague. Since she does not convey the nitty-gritty detail of what she thinks should be happening in the consulting-room, her description of the therapeutic relationship fails to come to life. Some detailed case-material would have been helpful: I found it difficult, for instance, to be sure what she thought on such crucial issues as whether or not the "holding" should include physical touching.

In her account of the transference relationship, where characters and scenarios from the client's past are unconsciously projected onto the psychotherapist, Klein seems to be suggesting that, early on, the therapist can most helpfully play the part of a non-intrusive maternal figure. Later, she suggests, as the client reaches a more verbal, toddler stage, the therapist should become more active in interpreting unconscious feelings and setting boundaries. This model is often presented as an alternative to the stance of analytic detachment.

The problem with this is, however, that in reducing the uniqueness of the psychotherapy relationship to a simple mother-child analogy, some of the richness of the client's inner world may be lost. As Klein has pointed out earlier, when criticising the "mother-centred" nature of some psychoanalytic theories, the child does have a range of other significant early relationships.

In the emotional intensity of the therapeutic setting, the psychotherapist will inevitably feel under enormous pressure to take on some of these different roles, to play out good or bad aspects of the client's parents, siblings or friends, often without becoming consciously aware of it. However, if she/he does succumb to this pressure, or to urges to enact some of her or his own inner, unresolved dramas, then the ability to help clients understand how they remain trapped in the continual repetition of past experiences may be lost.

I hope that Klein does give us a fuller version of her ideas on the links between infantile relationships and therapeutic practice. Meanwhile, I am sure that this vivid account will become a classic text for those requiring an introduction to this difficult, mainly psychoanalytic terrain. □

PAPERBACKS

A choice of evils

Paul Hallam

POMPOUS TITLES can sometimes be forgiven — as with **Against All Hope: The Prison Memoirs of Armando Valladares** (trans. Andrew Hurley, Coronet, £3.95) and Anatoly Marchenko's **My Testimony** (trans. Michael Scammell, Sceptre, £5.95). Both authors spent decades in prison, in Cuba and Russia respectively.

Like most such testimonies these are repetitious texts; the authors have had years to count prison cries and cracks in the walls. Marchenko's account is the more powerful, disarming criticism with "I don't consider myself a writer". Both books detail deprivations and torture. There is occasional relief: Marchenko enjoys the heavy ironies of compulsory singing ("Lenin Is Always With You") and the redecoration of the prison after Kruschev is discredited, with inmates merrily tacking Breznev heads to Kruschev bodies. The details convince you of the truth of the rest.

Valladares suffered as appallingly as Marchenko, but is prouder and less likeable. There is an undercurrent of Christ-identification — God was "a constant companion of mine". But

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here too there are details: the meticulous extraction of starch from macaroni to iron his shirt before a visit, escape preparations muffled with rumbas played on food cans and spoons, the ounce by ounce sneaking in of a sackful of fertiliser simply to spite an arrogant guard. It is churlish to criticise a man who ended up in a wheelchair, literally writing a poem in blood. Such memoirs are obviously vital, yet their appeal still leaves me uneasy.

Birdwatching from a cell is such a familiar image I was surprised to find it fresh in Lewis Nkosi's **Mating Birds** (Flamingo, £3.50). A young black prisoner watches the birds mating; as often as not the male misses, pale seed drips in the air. In his Durban cell the prisoner goes over his life, superficially with a prurient criminologist, in depth to himself. He recounts an ambiguous love for a white woman, wind blowing through her hair on the segregated beach "as through the wealthy pages of a smutty book". Their sex is at first a voyeuristic "pantomime", a subversion of race laws. When they do make love it leads to a rape charge and his death sentence. In court he was bored by the measured tones of white men, with "none of the sexual brevity of human speech". His own tone remains resilient and cheerful. Freedom songs from other parts of the prison finally sustain him.

Valerie Wilmer in **As Serious as Your Life: The Story of the New Jazz** (Pluto, £5.95) claims black music, along with cinema, as the "most important art form of this century". She looks at the music, the "things remembered, things invented" of Ornette Coleman, Sun Ra, Cecil Taylor, John Coltrane and lesser known players, careful always to relate it to the past, to revolt. She reminds us that the British once banned drums in America and the West Indies.

Wilmer is thorough on the players' lives, the problems of the industry (black produce/white packaging), the role of women and the difficulties in pushing discomfiting music that is "not a particularly encouraging backdrop for sexual overtures". She does strain rather to exonerate the players from any charge of being "middle class", and her reverence for artists can grate. "Little luxuries like bread and meat" are often denied her heroes. Dedication is more refreshingly summed up in Earl Cross's desire to "walk around the street looking like a trumpet if possible".

Willa Cather's 1922 novel, **One of Ours** (Virago, £4.95), has an altogether odd hero, a Nebraskan farmer, Claude, "a hayseed name trying to be fine". Hunky but sensitive, horrified by white America's materialism, Claude is most strongly drawn to his mother and Joan of Arc. He marries a dreadful prohibitionist who prohibits chicken from meeting cockerel when she can. It's a strong study of a stifling community that turned out men like "big machines with the springs broken inside". Claude and his kind are viewed as victims and dreamers, "children of the moon", for the moon has long visited "slaves' quarters, prison windows, fortresses where captives languished". He wants a world where literature means more than pamphlets on Hygiene, Hoof and Mouth and Prohibition. World War One, for all its hellishness, introduces him to comradeship, and to Europe.

In **After a Funeral** (Hamish Hamilton, £5.95) Diana Athill describes herself as a "sucker for oppressed foreigners". It is a brilliant short autobiographical account of her relationship with "Didi", an Egyptian novelist, a love that turns from "amorous to maternal". They parried with diaries, letters and notes, ranging from domestic gripes to dreadful indictments. Athill is acid; to borrow her own image, she pokes wire down the drain to dredge up the worst deposits. Didi is as hard on himself as she is: "a lecherous old Wog outside . . . Victorian maiden inside". As he moves towards chronic alcoholism and suicide, Athill finds the only way of getting through it is to "do one thing, then the next". A sort of mother love, gone sour. There is even a "Jocasta — given the chance" joke thrown in.

Andrea Giovene's epic **Sansevero** (trans. Marguerite Waldman and Bernard Wall, Quartet, 2 volumes, £6.95 each) is a majestic sweep through Italian history from 1903 to 1957. As a child, the eponymous nobleman hero keeps books of observations, analogues and hypotheses. He never really changes; *Sansevero* becomes his giant, lyrical/philosophical notebook. In a Nazi camp the hero "settled down to a respectable social life modelled on that of the woodworm". The usually detached Sansevero becomes most passionately involved in the fifth and previously untranslated part, searching for his daughter in London's "monstrous agglomeration of more than 80 villages". "For a good two miles . . . Holloway was as wide as a beach, and tormented like a railway."

After this extraordinary odyssey he finds rest in Italy, reflecting that, "Evil is wherever there is heaviness and oppression, the bleeding of things, bodies, souls." An epigraph, perhaps, for most of these books. □

OTHER VOICES

Snow blind

Olivia Harris

Living Arctic: Hunters of the Canadian North
HUGH BRODY *Faber* £4.95

MOST OF US have grown up knowing about Eskimos. Furry, cuddly, they are always smiling, whether travelling with dog teams across the Arctic wastes or snug inside a snow house.

Or, in a different vein, they evoke the tragic and the heroic, sustaining life in what to most people are unimaginable conditions, as for example in Robert Flaherty's spectacular film of the early 1920s, *Nanook of the North*.

In some ways the hunting peoples of the Arctic conform to the images which service our collective nostalgia for the primitive: a communal world where production is not alienated from consumption, where humans interact with instead of destroying the environment, where society is integrated with the cosmos. We are struck by — and in many cases half envious of — their extraordinary freedom. They have few physical possessions and, until the whites came, the only coercion they knew was from nature itself.

On the other hand we who live in temperate zones are dismayed by many features of their lives, in particular the cold and the lack of vegetation both in the white winter landscape and the diet. Not only do they live mainly on meat and fat, but some of it is not even cooked. The potential to romanticise is blocked off for most of us by the impossibility of imagining ourselves living such a life, or wishing to do so. Our Garden of Eden is warm and festooned with fruits.

In the period of colonial expansion, Arctic peoples were seen as benign because they occupied a waste land which outsiders did not want; on the contrary, the whalers and fur traders who sought the region's wealth were dependent on their skills. Stereotypes of sub-Arctic peoples were different. They *were* seen as a threat to the whites encroaching on their lands and were classified as poor and ignorant "Indians" requiring the benefits of civilisation. Things have changed now, of course, even in the far North, particularly with the exploitation of oil and gas, and throughout the region the hunters are involved in costly lawsuits to safeguard what remains of their land.

Hugh Brody's latest book celebrating these Northern hunters accompanies the recently opened Museum of Mankind exhibition of the same name. Where we see extreme cold as a threat, something to be battled against, he explores its adaptive advantages and communicates the excitement of the coming of winter (marked nowadays by the throbbing of the snowmobile engines). As for hunting, he not only establishes the healthiness of a pure flesh diet but, more importantly, indicates gracefully a relationship between hunter and hunted based on spiritual intimacy rather than the sadism that we associate with bloodsports.

Starting with these elemental features of indeigenous life in the far North, Brody then takes up a further set of themes: mobility, authority, children, language and the politics of the frontier. The text is printed on the right-hand page and the left is taken up mostly by photographs and quotations from northerners themselves. In contrast to normal practice, the quotations are all scrupulously attributed to named people in particular places, while the black-and-white photographs are without captions, freestanding. By this strategy Brody disturbs our voracious consumption of visual images and our easy habits of classifying and knowing the exotic.

Perhaps the most complex achievement of this finely-crafted book is to provide a means of understanding the *modernity* of the northern hunters without denying their difference. This does not reside in their ability to build snow houses or catch seal with harpoons, but on whether or not they win their land claims. Brody's work helps to contest the banal pessimism of those who lament that the world has become "Coca-colaised" and that there are no "unspoilt" places left. These northerners are now Christians wearing denim and they hunt mainly with guns; among their "traditional" dances are adaptations of Scottish reels; but they are nonetheless irrepressibly different. Through the pages of this book their unique voices demand to be heard and to be respected. □

NEW STATESMAN INDEX
The Index to Vol. 113 is now available, price £2.50 (incl. p&p). Send remittance to New Statesman (Index), Foundation House, Perseverance Works, 38 Kingsland Road, London E2 8DQ.

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CRIME

No hiding place

Nick Kimberley

THE DUST HAS settled, and it's now possible to confirm that 1987 was officially Ruth Rendell's Year.

She published two new novels, one of which won the Crime Writers' Gold Dagger Award for best crime novel. She also published a compelling novella, and closed the year with two substantial retrospective collections, **Wexford, An Omnibus** (Mysterious Press, £5.95) and **Collected Short Stories** (Hutchinson, £12.95).

The Wexford anthology contains the first novel she published, *From Doon With Death* (1964), and two others from the 1960s, *A New Lease of Death* and *The Best Man To Die*. Those titles shriek a warning at us: in these garishly convincing melodramas, death and misery are the only social cement, notwithstanding Chief Inspector Wexford's efforts to impose some other order.

Re-reading these early novels reminds me that Rendell herself has never been entirely happy with Wexford; she has always worked to deglamourise him, to rob him of omnipotence. He's "big and heavy and ugly" and wears a suit that's "shabby" and "wrinkled". His notion of gracious living stretches no further than apple pie for pudding. Rendell also keeps him out of the way as much as possible, forcing his subordinate Burden (pun no doubt intended) to do most of the legwork, and spending much of the time in the company of the civilians whose disrupted lives bring Wexford into action.

If these factors aren't quite enough to dispel the police novel's air of rectitude, they at least allow more interesting preoccupations to surface. What comes across is a sense that violence, guilt, tempestuous emotions will at any moment rupture the fabric of even the most ordered lives. While the prosaic Burden casts around for motive, Wexford is wiser in the ways of death: "Oh, motive. Any husband's got a motive." The intimacy (and not only marital) around which we necessarily build our lives will also tear them apart.

There's something biblical in this tortured view, and each chapter of *A New Lease of Death* bears an epigraph from *The Book of Common Prayer*, its piety not at all masking its thirst for vengeance. The epigraphs in *From Doon with Death* are provided by *The Oxford Book of Victorian Verse*: the stifling, and barely stifled, emotions of the poems aptly summarise Rendell's grim forebodings. That she can write cop stories with a fully functional mystery, and still give voice to her deep pessimism, is a mark of both her skill and the dramatic potential of even the most formula-bound genre.

There's less room for her talent in *Collected Short Stories*. These quick sketches of social calm disrupted by everyday agony allow little space for the hyperabundance of detail so lovingly dwelt on in her novels. Nor, in the stories which feature Wexford, is there the opportunity to portray him as anything but omniscient: asked how he knows what someone is thinking, his response can only be, "I just know." As elsewhere, Rendell is happiest with the not-too-comfortably-off middle classes: the working class and criminals tend to elude her.

But the fatal flaw is the stories' need for a sudden explanatory twist. Her best novels provide little security once their mystery has been "solved"; the form of the short story necessitates resolution. For Rendell, this borders on the supernatural — certainly not where her novels look for explanations.

It's more or less a rule of crime fiction that, when the supernatural intrudes, the point is lost. James Ellroy's **Because the Night** (Mysterious Press, £5.95) is a Los Angeles cop story, with Detective Sergeant Lloyd Hopkins tackling two cases which slowly intertwine. The necessary paranoia and violence saturate the book, but from the emblematic opening paragraphs a divide is established between *this* side of life and the *other*, where crimes of murder happen.

What we end up with is a quasi-supernatural view where the mayhem takes place in a world not subject to the rules we live by. Thus, anything can happen. Psychology here becomes an occult science, revealing all, explaining nothing. As is so often the case, homosexuality is the archetypal site of all repressions, so fearful that Hopkins can barely pronounce the word. Ellroy is certainly teasing us here with his refusal to be reasonable, but he can still only function in a world where violence comes from somewhere "beyond the beyond" — one of his characters' favourite sayings.

Lastly, two novels which toy with crime fiction, only to reject it. The decision may have been the wrong one. Scott Turow's **Presumed Innocent** (Bloomsbury, £12.95) is a first-person, present-tense story, narrated by a glib and self-pitying prosecuting attorney living in the Midwest. He's married, but the novel opens with the highly imaginative murder of his mistress. He, quite improperly, is assigned to the case, but ends up charged with the murder. Most of the rest of the novel is taken up (frequent reminiscing asides apart) by his trial: the courtroom drama, staple of film and TV screen, doesn't quite adapt to the novel and Turow draws his details out at too great a length. There's considerable skill here, but Turow is less interested in genre drama than in showing us greed, lust and jealousy at work in powerful people. No harm in that, but in his insistence on Serious Writing he slows down his narrative: a little more potboiler pace and slimness (the novel runs to over 400 pages) would improve it immeasurably.

Paul Auster's **The New York Trilogy** (Faber, £10.95) consists of three barely linked short novels, all playing with the metaphysics of detection: "In the good mystery there is nothing wasted, no sentence, no word that is not significant." That significance carries over into the details of New York life, which carry a cabbalistic message which Auster's characters have to decode in order to gain, or regain, their identity.

Auster is working in a European tradition while utilising elements of an American vernacular form. If in the end he seems defeated by his own project, it's because he abandons the detective story within his stories too easily. Nevertheless these are witty and inventive novels which suggest that crime fiction's powers are far from exhausted. □

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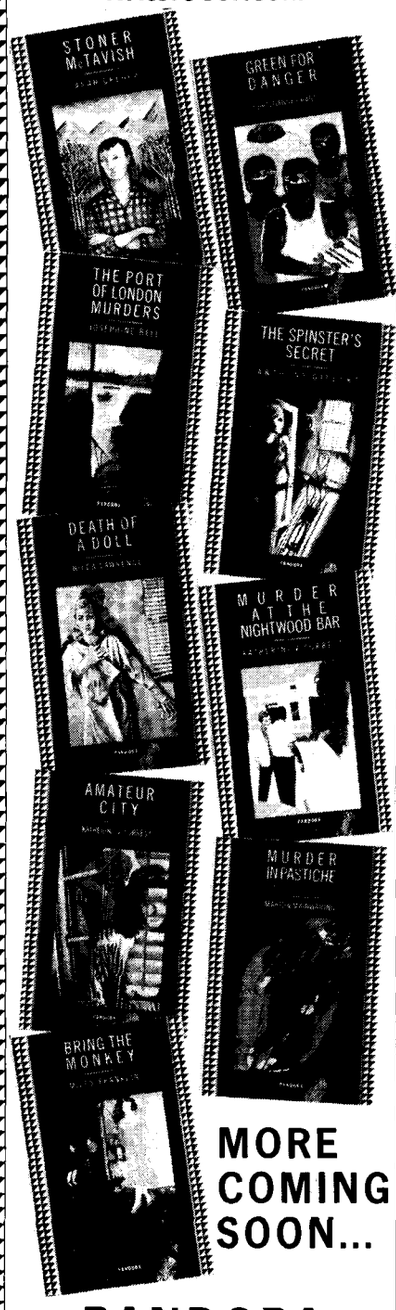

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Even more "Wicked Willie"

Tam Dalyell, MP, House of Commons, London SW1

Amid the encomiums to Lord Whitelaw, Bill Schwarz's "Wicked Willie" is a perceptive breath of reality (*NS* 15 Jan.).

Lord Whitelaw was a member of the War Cabinet, and must take his share of responsibility for the Falklands deceptions of Parliament. Equally, for the deceptions during Zircon, the Miners' strike, the Libyan bombing and others of Mrs Thatcher's enormities.

In particular, may I draw readers' attention to Peter Jenkins, *Mrs Thatcher's Revolution*, p.189: "At Chequers again that Sunday (5 January) the question was how to prevent Heseltine from — as she said — running circles around Brittan. Among those present were Lord Whitelaw and John Wakeham. Nothing, however, could be decided until the Mayhew trap had been sprung." And Julian Critchley, MP, Page 153 of his *Heseltine: the unauthorised biography*: "Over the weekend of 4 and 5 January, the Prime Minister discussed tactics with Lord Whitelaw and John Wakeham at Chequers."

How are we to suppose otherwise than that "Wicked Willie" was up to his neck in the deception of the House of Commons over Westland?

Learning from Uncle Jo

Sean Cullen, London W12

Hilary Wainwright's report of putative divisions in the Liberal Party is, to say the least, rather one-sided (*NS* 8 Jan.). David Steel's political philosophy is consistent with Jo Grimond's. The basic concept of realignment of the left to incorporate social welfare with liberal attitudes towards freedom and including a radical reform of the electoral and political systems stems from Jo Grimond and is being activated by David Steel. What Steel fails to do is be diverted from his path and, as one of the few British politicians who knows where he is trying to go, that is hardly indicative of a lack of liberalism. How it is interpreted says more about his critics than it does about David Steel.

The new constitution encourages wider member involvement both at local and higher level. It also creates a structure in which communication between the ordinary member and the centre becomes easier and more likely to happen. It will facilitate the creation of the only political party in which a two way flow of views can occur. Being a member of a party in which each member is valued and involved should be an attractive proposition to considerably more people than ever joined either of the Alliance parties.

The day before Hilary Wainwright's article appeared there was an advertisement in *Liberal News* signed by 650 Liberals calling for 'merger without delay'. The list of signatories was gathered from the widest range ever known for such a campaign in the Liberal Party — councillors, parliamentary candidates, constituency officers, activists and ordinary members from every region and county. The view of a great many Liberals is not merely that it is 'Merger Now or Merger Never' but that the proposed terms are forward looking, positive and attractive.

THE ANCIENT WISDOM

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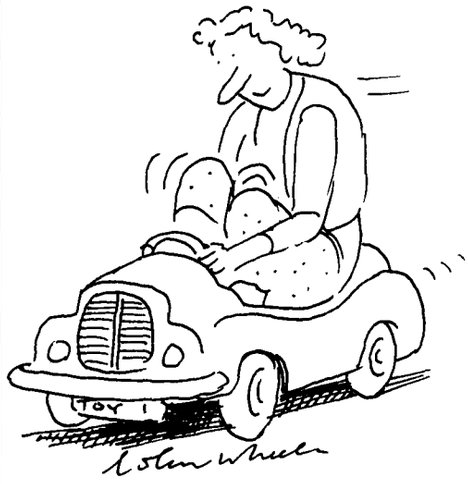

Tales from another planet

Sarah Lamb, London N1

A novelist friend of mine who, like Francis Wheen's friend (*NS* 15 Jan.), had trouble with her car insurance, was told by a rather friendlier broker that it would help if she could legitimately call herself a *children's* writer. She speedily wrote a book for young children and her premium is now quite reasonable.

Narrow, graceless era

Patricia Holland, London SW8

Judith Williamson writes with a retro-sensibility formed in the '60s and '70s, whereas I saw *Wish You Were Here* (NS Christmas issue) with the eyes of someone brought up in the period it depicts, and did not find the characters excessive or grotesque.

For me it recalled all too painfully the experience of growing up in a narrow and graceless era, in a class of small shop-keepers and minor managers anxious to deny its closeness to the working class but without the money or the education to claim the privileges of the middle class. It was a time when what was on offer to an adolescent seemed unfulfilling and repressive — both aesthetically and ethically — but whose values had to be embraced because there was no other way of reaching adulthood. Visual nostalgia can be a channel for understanding the past and coming to terms with one's own childhood.

Emily, unlike many a female star, is not set up as a spectacular object for male viewers to enjoy. Her 'prettiness' can be seen as a point of identification for the female half of the audience. It can signal a sort of normality, act as a cue for memory.

This is a film that goes well beyond appearances. It is a moving contribution to David Leland's exploration of childhood and adolescence begun in his television quartet *Made in Britain*, and has far more to offer than a mere aestheticising of history.

Titans clash — tiens!

J. W. Hurst, West Malling, Kent

On page 17 (*NS* 8 Jan.) Bryan Gould says ". . . the deflation of the real economy . . . has reduced most people's prosperity . . ." while on page 20 John Lloyd talks of "The benign effects of greater material comfort for the majority . . ." It would be helpful to observers of the Socialist scene if two of the left's leading apologists could check each other's stories prior to publication. For the record, which statement is correct?

Look it up, Ed!

Tim Beecham, London SW4

Ed Pearce has it wrong. Wittgenstein did not write (in the *Tractatus*) "Whereof we cannot know, thereof we should not speak." It was "Whereof one cannot speak, thereon one should remain silent". The proper syllogistic inference from all this is, of course: "Whereof we can only half remember, thereof we should look it up before we publish it."

Senile dementia

Sally Furnish, Clinical Psychologist for the elderly, Cardiff

While I would wholly endorse Sarah Benton's main conclusions (*NS* 8 Jan.), the air of complacency about the funding of pressure groups representing elderly people is unwarranted.

That charities for the elderly "have much more money than most" is linked to the idea that "the fate of being old is one we all expect". The association rests on a prevalent public image of frail elderly people surviving with the help of volunteers and neighbourly support. While true for many, this view conveniently omits the increasing numbers of older people who require a full-time total care package at some stage. For example, almost 20 per cent of people over 75 have the progressive and terminal brain disease dementia. Voluntary organisations make an invaluable contribution to the support of people with dementia and related conditions, but are frequently troubled that their seemingly generous contributions from government are used to obscure the woefully inadequate statutory provision.

The article also presents a distinction between the needs of elderly people as against the homeless and low paid, which fails to acknowledge the basic interconnection between increasing age and unacceptable living conditions. Older people are over-represented in

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all sectors of the socially deprived adult population, including those on low incomes and the homeless.

These points are amply explored in a book on the politics of ageing by Joanna Bornat, Chris Phillipson and Sue Ward (*A Manifesto for Old Age*, 1985, Pluto Press) which deserves a much higher degree of recognition than it has ever received.

Naught for your comfort

Sara Starkey, London NW3

I know the public, Hilary Bichovsky-Little and Radio 4's *Newsstand* (which picked up on your review) want to and will choose to believe James Le Fanu is right — that what we eat has naught to do with our health (*NS* 8 Jan.).

Le Fanu may well be able to prove that life expectancy in the Western world is at record levels. But those who contribute to these wondrous statistics are those elderly *now* in their 70s and 80s. They grew up *before* the agricultural revolution of factory farmed animals (with the inevitable explosion in stressed beasts and poultry being given antibiotics, hormones, unnatural and chemically processed and treated food); and *before* crops were continually sprayed with over 100,000 million gallons of pesticide a year.

This myth about our "good" health is widely held; yet cancer is rapidly increasing from 1 in 4 to 1 in 3, and in ever younger age groups. Childhood diabetes has risen 13-fold since 1945; eczema now affects 1 in 5, asthma 1 in 10; herpes, cot deaths, candida, mental illness and Aids are on the up and up. The government commissioned, and then suppressed, National Advisory Committee on Nutrition Education report of 1983 says "a 40-year-old man in 1971 faced the same risk of coronary heart disease as a 55-year-old in 1921".

I agree with Le Fanu that many of our ills have to do with our environment but to suggest that what we eat is not part and parcel of this "environment" is wishful thinking. I'm convinced that if the spritely 85-year-old of today had, in their formative years, lived on a diet of McDonalds, Mars Bars, Smiths crisps and Ribena — as so many of us and our children do — most would have been six foot under many a long year ago.

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County Education Department
Penwithen Hostel, Winterborne Monkton, Dorset

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Scale Three D2648X00

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The post is residential and a flat is offered on site for which the appropriate charges will be made.

Informal enquiries and visits will be welcomed. Applicants are invited to contact the Deputy Officer in Charge Mrs L. Bradshaw on Dorchester 64315.

Application forms and further details of the post are available from the Staffing Office, Education Department, County Hall, Dorchester. Tel No: 204375 and returnable to the Penwithen Hostel, Winterborne Monkton, Dorchester by 2 February 1988.

APPOINTMENTS

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SCOTTISH TRADES UNION CONGRESS

SCOTTISH TRADES UNION CONGRESS
POST OF
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

Applications are invited for the above senior post within our organisation. Job description, details of salary and application form are available from:

Sandra Walker
Scottish Trades Union Congress
16 Woodlands Terrace
Glasgow G3 6DF
Tel: 041-332 4946

Closing date for applications is: **Thursday, 18 February 1988.**

Interviews to be held **Friday, 26 February 1988.**

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Contact **Carol Anne Brown or Karen Bielby 01-739 1645** to place your recruitment advertising

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In the constant fight against homelessness and inadequate housing, Shelter has reviewed its resources and operations, due to restructuring at senior management level, applicants are now invited for three Assistant Director posts based at Shelter's Head Office.
This new team will have proven management skills, the ability to work, encourage and stimulate interest in Shelter's aims and ideals.
Shelter's salary structure is under review following job evaluation.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FUNDRAISING

With experience in fundraising, an innovative and energetic approach, you will be able to co-ordinate staff working on direct mail, donations sponsorship and payroll deduction. You will be involved in one of the most crucial aspects of Shelter's work.
You must have the ability to take up the challenge!

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Do you have the flair to manage and develop Shelter's housing advice and projects strategy?
Have you got the ability to oversee the development of the training sector?
Can you develop and initiate new concepts?
If you think you are the person we require to handle this challenging position, you will need to have had experience in the voluntary housing or related projects sector.

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If you have the qualities required for any of the above posts, then we at the Shelter organisation would like to hear from you.

Please write or telephone for an application form:

Ms Margaret Donelley
Shelter
88 Old Street
London EC1V 9HU

Tel: (01) 253 0202

Closing date: 19th February 1988

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Shelter
NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE HOMELESS

CHIEF EXECUTIVE
(£28,080-£30,261)

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The Chief Executive is responsible for the efficient management and execution of the Council's functions and, as head of the Council's management team, for ensuring the efficient and effective implementation of the Council's policies and programmes.

The successful applicant, probably a graduate with a relevant professional qualification, will be an experienced manager with a proven record of success at senior level, preferably in local government.

The District has a population of about 82,000 largely resident in East Kilbride — Scotland's first and most successful New Town. It contains an interesting mix of high quality urban development (in the New Town) and rural hinterland (containing Strathaven and other small towns and villages, with several Conservation Areas). The New Town is continuing to expand rapidly with extensive residential, industrial, commercial and recreational and leisure developments currently under way.

The District Council is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

Application forms (to be returned not later than 18th February, 1988), together with job description and other relevant information, may be obtained from:

East Kilbride district council

W. Gordon McNay, Chief Executive, Civic Centre, East Kilbride G74 1AB. Tel: (03552) 28777, Ext. 252.

bifu

Banking, Insurance & Finance Union

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Application form and job description available from: BIFU, Sheffield House, 1b Amity Grove, Raynes Park, SW20 0LG. Closing date for receipt of application forms is 19 February 1988. Telephone 01-946 9151.

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Enquiries: Jenny Shramenko 01-739 1645

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Deadline: 2pm Mondays

THE COGERS, founded 1755, discuss/debate the "Events of the Week" every Saturday 8pm at the "Albion", Ludgate Circus, EC4. All welcome.

TUES 26 JAN

END THE OCCUPATION of the West Bank & Gaza. A public meeting with a Jewish, Palestinian platform. Speakers: Faisal Aouwheida (P.L.O.), Richard Hauser, Elfi Pallis at 7.30pm. Friends House, Euston Road, NW1. Organised by the Jewish Socialists Group.

CITY OF LONDON
FABIAN SOCIETY
Inaugural Meeting
Speaker: **Rt Hon. John Smith MP**
Tuesday 26 January at 6.15pm
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All who work in or around the City welcome.
Further details from: **Nick Butler on 01-769 4116**

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LECTURES

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PUBLICATIONS

REVIEW COPIES and other books in fine condition bought and sold by Vermillion Books, 57 Red Lion St, London WC1. Tel: 01-242 5822. N49.24

PERSONAL

CANDIDATES are invited for consideration in the Labour Party's selection in the **SURREY WEST EUROPEAN CONSTITUENCY.** Please contact Brian Mountain, 16 Warwick Road, Ash Vale, Aldershot GU12 5PL, Hants. Telephone 0252 515456. W4.2

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Weekend competition

No 3009 **Set by E. O. Parrott**

Some while ago, on a Pennine pathway, there was found a brand new coffin lined with pink plush. Inside were a take-away Indian meal, some Co-op stamps and some old computer tape (honestly). Could we have reasonable explanations, in max. 12 lines of verse, for this event. Deadline 3 February.

No 3006 **Set by Gerard Benson**

Translations from the Ish of the following poem:

Ag ráfni pelgo á binyô,
Dif yolt ag rafna dxoe korr ggô,
  Qirú, qirú gileht —
Torr pelg, ish cosplin ravni ood,
Ag binyô ibhelen ta dxood;
  Ag lin Agliin ô dxeht!

Report **By Rosie Hughes**

Oh, my apple dumplings, how you rallied to this one: Babe had to take up body-building (what we used to call "keep fit") to cope with the sackloads of entries that kept on arriving. A PS from C.J. Doyle — "Most enjoyable!" — seemed to sum up your reaction, while the honorable losers include David Toley for his plagiarism of a 1947 *Educating Archie* joke and Naomi Hull for translating the Ish into Stomi (*very* clever). Twelve pounds each.

This is a fairly literal translation. The poet was keen on "the real language of men" and thus uses some demotic expressions. Word order and punctuation are necessarily modified.

In the morning I go down to the kitchen:
Perhaps my wife has secretly prepared a surprise [*volt*]
  for me this morning.
  Blimey, what is revealed —
The cat has "gone down", I see the day totally ruined.
I have never seen such a shambles in the kitchen.
  O the blow in my vitals, my inmost vitals!

MARY HOLTBY

Behold the tossing rollers of our waves Down Under,
Dive from our coral into gold and diamond thunder,
  And wonder, and wonder, what lies there below —
Our seas are dark: your kin, the shark, ravenous for
  plunder,
Will tear your tongue asunder;
  Iô hô hô!

Ish, an Australian Aborigine language carries echoes of Greek (*pelgo*) and German (*gileht, ibhelen*) as well as English. *Ráfni, rafna* = rough waves; *binyô* = beneath; lin *Agliin* = the English language.

GINA BERKELEY

Cold rain is falling upon the refuse collector.
This churl hates rain because it loses time;
  Bugger! Bugger! he complains.
Such a deluge, unseasonable in Ish, of wet rain,
The cold, unhappy refuse collector swears,
  Would freeze King Aglin himself mortally.

JOHN STANLEY

So hurricane and storm and flood
Have churned the fields to clinging mud,
  Bloody[1], bloody rains!
The pub's jammed full with weather bores[2],
Beer's drowned in talk of trees and saws,
  And ghastly tales of drains[3].

The Ish climate is notoriously wet, especially during the winter months (Sept-June) and is frequently used as the objective correlative for the Ish national ego. Damp conditions, while encouraging rots, moulds and fungus growth of all kinds, tend to depress the id.

1) Ish is richly endowed with expletives, oaths and obscenities. English "bloody" is not a close translation, but is one of the few printable versions.

2) ood — lit. a bachelor octogenarian uncle of one's wife, traditionally invited at Christmas.

3) The Ish drains (Byron's "the dxeht that stink of thousand shits") and their consequences are well-documented by travellers.

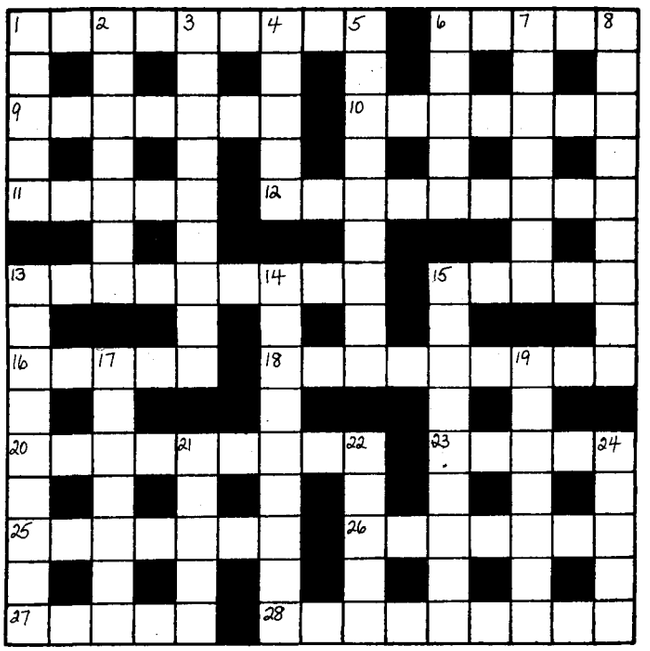
D. A. PRINCE

The white cherry blossom falls
Like gentle snow upon the bald head
  Of the venerable sage
As he murmurs
that poets who write in gibberish
  Should be dropped down the nearest well.

E. O. PARROTT

Weekend Crossword 1583

PRIZES: £5 Book Tokens for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1583, New Statesman, Foundation House, Perseverance Works, 38 Kingsland Road, London E2 8DQ, by first post 8 February.



Name_____

Address_____

ACROSS

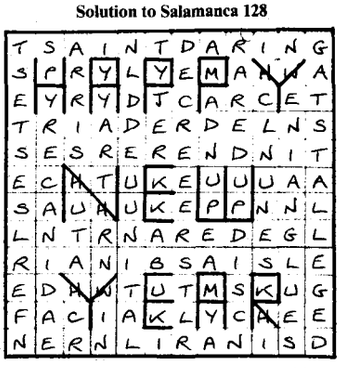
1. If the critic omitted something boring, he would become a supporter (9)
6. Records broken by runners? (5)
9. Comfort for prisoners including the sick (7)
10. Senior woman performed without money (7)
11. Fear of cheap literature? (5)
12. Set apart, the prophet holds a search (9)
13. Hating to be away from home, having lost again (9)
15. Bob's broken head this may be used to mend (5)
16. Overseas explorer needs a land vehicle to return (5)
18. Favours taking a novelist to heart (9)
20. Servant gives help to back number (9)
23. Lace for Iris (5)
25. Long-distance flyer has to storm after fighter (7)
26. Growing less, so including some canned food in one's shopping container (7)
27. No play like this would be a remedy (5)
28. Revision course concerned with new student (9)

DOWN

1. Animal spends a penny among the flowers (5)
2. Visitors who have to go abroad in the middle (7)
3. Performance of actors who don't travel on motorways? (9)
4. Games for which street radio is turned up (5)
5. Colour and shape appearing in the Russian capital (3,6)
6. It sounds like the right moment for a plant (5)
7. The gods dined among the writers (7)
8. Extreme steepness for a place on the coast (9)
13. Name for music done in variations (9)
14. Where King George holds a tribal review (9)
15. Piece of music for voice in setting composition (9)
17. He causes one to come and live right outside the circle (7)
19. If there were no Western capital the city would have no wealthy people (7)
21. Yes, the old railway is cut short by the river (5)
22. Little man whose heart for the fight (5)
24. Tease us when going up for food (5)

SETSQUARE

Solution to Salamanca 128



Theme: o(old changes to n(new) throughout. Motto: Eat, drink and be merry. Charades: 16 naiad; three. 20 kit; twit. 32 sot; many. 38 style; passage. 15 shoe; idea. 35 chews; gums.

Prizewinners to Salamanca 128

H. D. Soutar (Salisbury)
Peter A. H. Wyatt (Sidmouth, Devon)
Dr J. M. Hutchinson (Aberdeen)
Mrs S. L. Jordan (Didcot, Oxon.)
Neville Harris (London N2)

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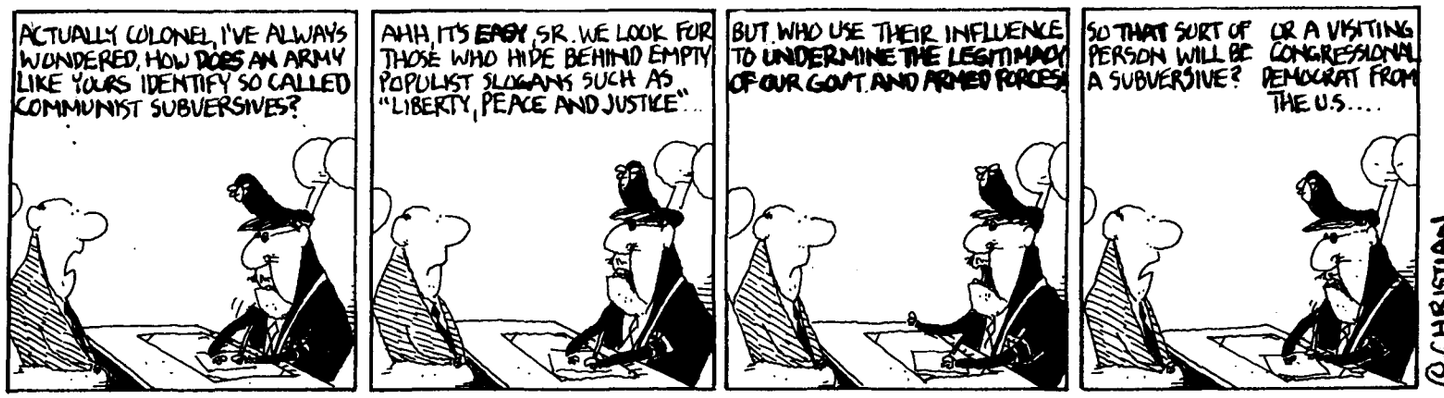
ACTUALLY COLONEL, I'VE ALWAYS WONDERED, HOW DOES AN ARMY LIKE YOURS IDENTIFY SO CALLED COMMUNIST SUBVERSIVES?
AHH, IT'S EASY, SIR. WE LOOK FOR THOSE WHO HIDE BEHIND EMPTY POPULIST SLOGANS SUCH AS "LIBERTY, PEACE AND JUSTICE"...
BUT, WHO USE THEIR INFLUENCE TO UNDERMINE THE LEGITIMACY OF OUR GOVT. AND ARMED FORCES?
SO THAT SORT OF PERSON WILL BE A SUBVERSIVE?
OR A VISITING CONGRESSIONAL DEMOCRAT FROM THE U.S....
©CHRISTIAN

Chess

QUANTITY or quality? Hastings went for quality by turning its Premier into a double-rounder for just eight players. There was certainly something to be said for any change that would halt decline through chronic under-funding. Things had been getting embarrassing. English players with a growing international reputation would wait until they were receiving enough invitations to be choosy and then declare they had pushed their last pawn at Hastings. Ingratitude perhaps, but what can you expect from those who have borne such eccentricities as having to play directly beneath a stage that bounced to the stomping of an all-singing, all-dancing pantomime? It was the ultimate test in concentration — 'Male-voice choir? What male-voice choir?' — and everyone wanted to funk it.

Sponsorship by the *Foreign & Colonial* management group has helped Hastings to start restoring its status. But the economies of a double-round event, with many of the costs of organisation cut in half, were irresistible. In particular they made it possible to assemble a field that made up in strength for what it lacked in numbers: Larsen (Denmark), Benjamin (USA), Psakhis (USSR), Short, Speelman, Nunn, Chandler, and Davies (all England). Unfortunately, I cannot banish the thought that if the tournament committee had been as selective as this in 1895, Pillsbury would have been relegated to the Challengers!

Since heaps of Elo points do not necessarily make for exciting games, there is always a danger that a subsidiary tournament may outshine the main event. And indeed the most important result at Hastings did come in the Challengers, where Susan Arkell achieved the norm required for a regular (i.e., *male*) international master title. There have been very few female players who have ever performed at that standard. Susan did not display the precocious brilliance of the Polgar sisters, but she has steadily built on a sound understanding of positional factors to become a complete, well-prepared and highly professional player. Of course, it is also quite helpful that her husband, Keith, is an IM himself. Susan should now be ranked, along with Pia Cramling of Sweden, as the best in Western Europe. More tournament invitations should follow for mixed events, and I hope there will be many more results that prove to girls that they can compete at this level. The sexual imbalance in chess is an old mystery just waiting for a few determined and self-confident young ladies to blow it away.

Whatever you think of the format of the Premier, at least it provided a workout for Speelman and Short by way of preparation for their forthcoming matches against Seirawan and Sax (a sibilant set of candidates, eh?). Let's take stock of the opposition by looking at a couple of games in which they were in devastating form. First, a demonstration of what Seirawan is aiming for when he plays the Queen's Gambit Accepted:

Franco-Seirawan, Arnhem/Amsterdam 1983.
1. Nf3 Nf6 2. c4 c5 3. Nc3 e6 4. e3 d5 5. d4 a6 6. a3 dxc4 In his notes in *Informator* Seirawan shows he likes the transposition into a QGA by giving his last two moves a '!'. **7. Bxc4 b5 8. Bd3 Nbd7 9. 0-0 Bb7 10. Bc2?** A waste of time. If he means to exchange on c5 he might as well do so now. Otherwise 10. Qe2 followed by Rd1. **Rc8 11. dxc5 Bxc5 12. e4 Qc7** Black is already better. His early Q-side expansion enables his minor pieces to train their fire on the centre. **13. Qe2 0-0 14. Bd2 Ng4 15. h3 Nge5 16. Nxe5 Nxe5 17. Rad1 Bd4! 18. Bb1 Nc4 19. Bc1 Qe5!** This demanded a combination of calculation and judgement. **20. Kh1 Nxb2** Not just a way to win a pawn . . . **21. f4 Nxd1!** . . . but the introduction of a positional Q-sac. 21 . . . Qc5 22. Bxb2 Bxc3 23. Rc1 b4 was also playable, though less potent. **22. fxe5 Nxc3 23. Qd3 Rc4** With a winning domination of the centre. **24. Re1 Bf2 25. Rf1 Nxb1 26. Qxb1 Bxe4 27. Qb3 Rc2 28. Rd1 Bc5 29. Bd2 Rd8 30. Re1 Rd3! 0-1.**

Now for Sax in his favourite rôle as scourge of the Sicilian:

Sax-Salazar, Dubai Olympiad 1986.
1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 e6 3. cxd4 Nxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 d6 6. Be3 a6 7. Qd2 Ng4 This really does look crude and premature. **8. Bg5 Qc7** 8 . . . Qb6, eyeing both f2 and b2, might be better. What Black has in mind is . . . Ne5-c4, which goes to explain White's next. **9. Qe2 Qc5 10. Qxg4 Qxd4 11. Be3 Qb4 12. 0-0-0 Nc6 13. f4 b5?** Black has resolved to take every possible liberty! What causes his downfall is not so much his lack of development as the fact that he has to open the game up to rescue his own Queen from a trap he has dug himself. **14. Bb6! d5 15. exd5 Ne5** Showing a bit of fight. **16. Qg3 Nc4 17. Bxc4 bxc4** So the Bb6 is *en prise*. But why should White care about that if he can clear the centre files? **18. dxe6! Qxb6 19. Nd5 Qc5 20. f5** With a threat of Nc7+. **Ra7 21. e7! f6** Equally hopeless are 21 . . . Bxe7 22. Qxg7 Rf8 23. Rhe1 and 21 . . . Rxe7 22. f6!. Sax now plays the ruthless move, instead of allowing the game to drag on after 22. exf8=Q+ Kxf8. **22. Rhe1 Rd7 23. Nc7+! 1-0.**

Having administered those two doses of antidote against over-confidence among British chess fans, I can give the good news from Hastings. After warming up in the early rounds, Short and Speelman dominated the event. It would have been a fair result if they had tied for first place, but Short has a knack of getting his nose in front when it counts. Jon tried for seven hours to win his last game, but in the end fell half a point short of Nigel.

George Botterill

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This England

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☐ Motorists who remember the golden age of West Country traffic jams are being offered weekend breaks to mull over the miseries of sitting bumper-to-bumper in 20-mile queues of holiday traffic. The West County Tourist Board has selected July for two special "traffic jam weekends" which will include a tour of old bottlenecks in a 1950 jalopy — 25 per cent off the bill if you provide your own elderly wheels. — *Independent* (David Bays)

☐ Sophie Mirman and Richard Ross can still smile, even though their equity stake in Sock Shop has fallen from £49 million to £38 million. The husband and wife team remains individually insured for £1 million and so conscious is she of her value to the company that Sophie told me yesterday that she even has her food tasted. — *The Times* (Leonard Cox)

☐ In an unlikely departure, I hear that Derbyshire County Council has sent 15 of its library staff on an assertiveness training course. — *Daily Telegraph* (George Moor)

☐ At Frankland, Durham, there were no security cameras or lights in one part of the gaol because of a protected species of moth. — *Guardian* (Peter Barnes)

☐ Prescribed medical drugs kill around 15,000 British people a year. That's more than twice the number of people who die in road accidents. — *Here's Health* (Joan Goldman)

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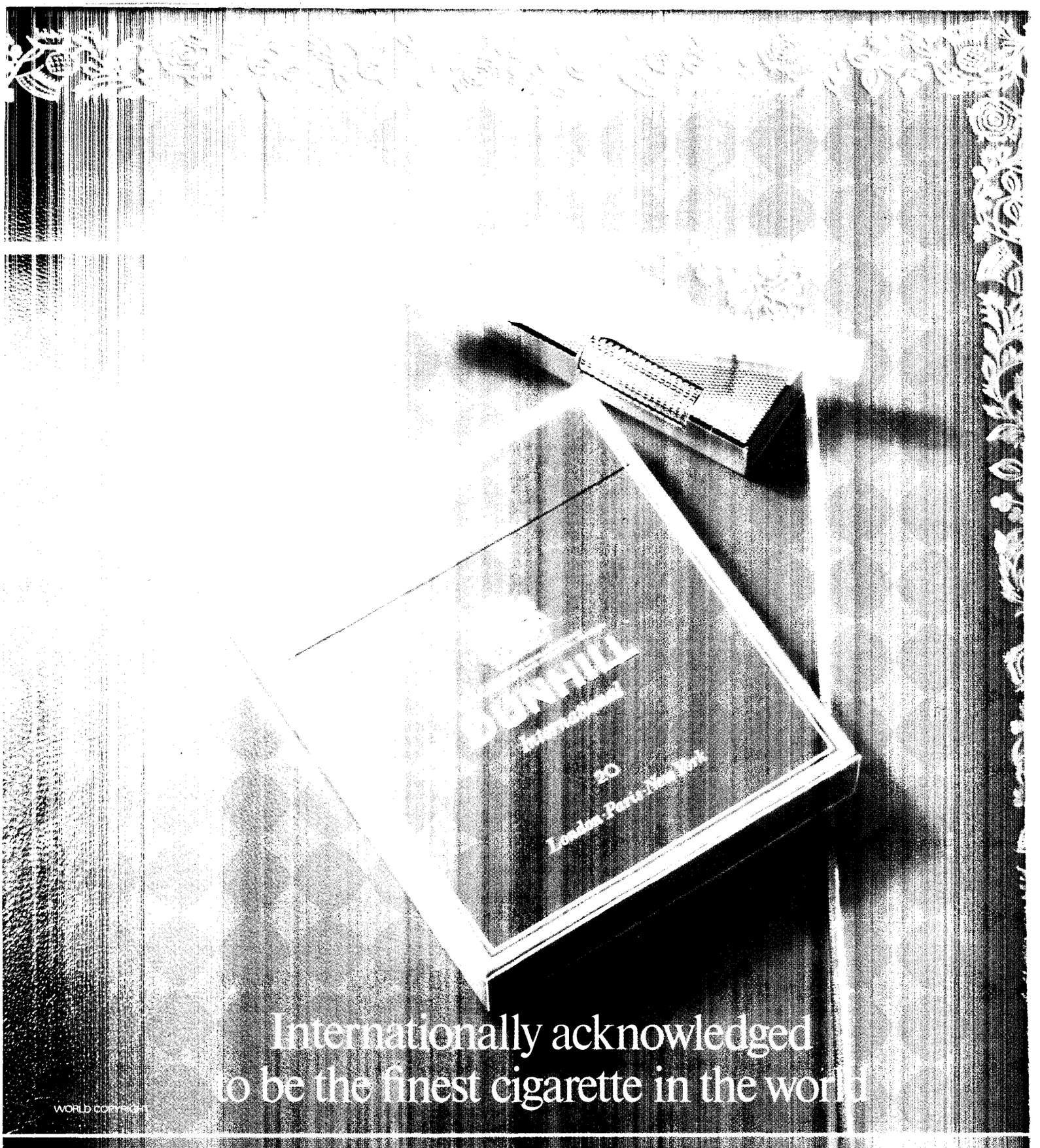

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